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Works of the late reverend
William Romaine

WORKS

OF

THE LATE REVEREND

WILLIAM ROMAINE, A. M.

RECTOR OF

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AND

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A

TREATISE

UPON THE

WALK OF FAITH.

PART II.

Walk humbly with THY God. Micah vi. 8.

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A

TREATISE,

&c. &c.

CHAP. IX.

The believer exercised with the outward cross carries it with patience, and finds it a great help to him in his walk heavenwards.

WE call that a cross, which opposes our will. This opposition renders it painful and grievous. A very little matter, the least trifle, becomes a great cross, when our will is set much against it. How then can the believer rejoice with an heavy cross upon his back? Or how can he rejoice all his days, if he must carry it to his grave? The blessed gospel discovers how this may be, and the blessed spirit gives the experience of it: for he continues to teach the doctrines of grace, and under the cross he enforces them. What has been treated of in the former chapters

chapters he now applies with life and power. The doctrines are put to the trial, and it appears that they are of God: for none could produce the effects which follow upon believing them, but an almighty arm. Faith is tried in the fire, and the believer is convinced it is the faith of God's elect: for the promise is made good—"When thou walkest through the very "fire thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the "flame kindle upon thee." His love to his reconciled God is put into the fiery furnace, and it comes out, like the three children, sensible their God had been with them in the furnace, and their God had brought them out; for which marvellous instances of his love to them, their love was increased to him. This is God's way. He gives grace, and then tries it. When he has enabled the sinner by believing to find peace and love, then he would improve those graces by daily exercise, and if the exercise of them be very sharp and afflicting, it is only to establish the trust of his heart, and to confirm the affection of his soul more perfectly in his God. His God. Mind that. His God still. The cross is not sent to weaken that relation. He is the same tender Father to his children, when he puts it upon them, as when he takes it off: and he would have them by faith to experience it. While they depend on his being perfectly reconciled to them through the obedience and sacrifice

fice of Immanuel, they will ſee the ſame paternal affection invariably ſet upon them, and always diſpoſed to do them good. His love changeth not. The happy objects of it have given this glorious teſtimony, even when under his croſs---" WE KNOW that all things work " together for good"---they found it ſo. Whatever he ſent to them came with a meſſage of his love. " Hear ye the rod, and him that ſent " it." They hear what he ſays by it, for it ſpeaks of the Father's love, and the belief of this quiets their minds under the ſtroke of his rod. Thus it anſwers his purpoſe—This cometh not forth of the duſt, but is appointed for me; my Father ſent it, not in anger for the puniſhment of my ſins, but in the tenderneſs of his affection—He is not dealing with me as the ſupreme diſpoſer of all events, who may afflict and juſtly his rebel creatures according to his ſovereign will; but he has ſent me this affliction with a meſſage of grace and peace—I know it is well ordered---I kiſs the rod, and I bleſs him that ſent it.

The apoſtle Paul uſes this argument to the ſuffering Hebrews. They had endured a long and great fight of afflictions. They had need of patience: He therefore gives them in the 11th chapter a ſhort hiſtory of the Lord's favorites, and ſhews that they all carried his croſs, and that he ſupported them all under it: Yea gave them

ſtrength to run their race, till every one of them won the prize: Then he requires them to look to Jeſus, the greateſt ſufferer, out of whoſe fulneſs they might receive faith to run, and patience happily to finiſh the ſame race. And leſt they ſhould be weary through ſuffering long, or faint in their minds under hard ſuffering, he reminds them of the character of their heavenly Father, who out of the tendereſt love appointed their croſſes:—"Have ye forgotten the exhortation, "ſays the apoſtle, in which your Father ſpeaketh "unto you as unto children? MY SON, deſpiſe "not thou the chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint "when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the "Lord loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every "ſon whom he receiveth. If ye endure chaſten-"ing God dealeth with you as with ſons: For "what ſon is he whom the Father chaſteneth "not? But if ye be without chaſtiſement, where-"of ALL are partakers, then are ye baſtards, "and not ſons." O what a bleſſed exhortation! How full of love---the love of God the Father--love to his child, who wants correction---love that would not touch him with the rod, till he had moſt tenderly informed him of his gracious purpoſe: My SON, my beloved, this chaſtening is from thy Father. It was determined for thee by covenant love, and ſettled upon thee for thy portion in the great charter of heaven. All thy croſſes were then mercifully appointed---their weight

weight and meaſure---how long---how great---how many---what ſtrength was needful to bear them---what comforts under them---and what holy fruits ſhould be produced by them---all was fixed by love, is now given in love, and is to bring thee to greater enjoyment of my love. My dear child, deſpiſe not then my chaſtening, nor faint when I rebuke thee. Be aſſured it is for thy good. There is a *needs muſt*. It is ſo neceſſary, that I cannot love thee without chaſtening thee, nor receive thee among mine adopted without ſcourging thee. See then, how thou takeſt my correction. Look at thy temper and behaviour under it. Examine. Art thou patient? Not ſuffering merely, but ſuffering quietly is the proof of thine adoption---If ye ENDURE chaſtening---If when I afflict, thou canſt poſſeſs thy ſoul in patience under mine afflicting hand, then I deal with thee as with ſons---I give thee thy portion of ſuffering, and I give thee thy portion of grace to bear it. All my children want correcting, and they all have it: for what ſon is he whom the Father chaſteneth not? They are all ſufferers. Mine only begotten was the greateſt. None of you can ſuffer as he did: But whoever is following him muſt ſhare with him in his croſs, and bear it after him. If any be without my chaſtiſement, whereof all mine are partakers: If they cannot bear it, have not faith to receive my loving correction, and therefore no patience

to wait the bleſſed iſſue of it, ſuch do not belong to my family; they are none of mine; they are baſtards, and not ſons.

How ſhould the argument in this ſcripture reconcile the believer to ſuffering? How eaſy, yea how happy, ſhould it make him under the croſs? He ſuffers, but it is from his Father, who in moſt perfect love and infinite wiſdom appointed the croſs, and appointed alſo the precious fruits, which it ſhould produce. O my ſoul, keep this in mind. Remember whoſe croſs thou art carrying. Thy Father contrived it. He ſent, and continues it that it may work under him for the beſt. It is the chaſtening of his richeſt love. Receive it then patiently, thankfully at his hands, and thou wilt find it full of bleſſings. But take heed how thou conſulteſt ſenſe or carnal reaſon. Theſe are always enemies to the croſs: for they judge of it only by feeling, and always refuſe to believe what God ſays concerning it. Adhere to the truth: And reject every ſuggeſtion, which would inſinuate to thee, that there is any thing but love in the chaſtening of the Lord. He is thy Father. He never loves thee more, than when he chaſtens thee. There is no hatred in his heart. No vengeance in his hand. He aſſures thee of this from the infallible word of his mouth. Here may thy faith be ſettled: Believe him---he is doing thee good---he is promoting thy beſt intereſt. Caſt not away this confidence,

and then the croſs will be the means of bringing thee to the neareſt and holieſt communion, which thou canſt have with thy Father on this ſide heaven.

In this amiable light look upon thy Father and thy friend. Never forget it, O my ſoul, but keep it in the faith of thy heart, eſpecially when he chaſteneth thee. Then expect from his love patience under his ſtroke, and after it the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs. Theſe will grow abundantly upon the croſs. They grow no where elſe ſo rich and ripe. Survey the promiſes, which he has made to his ſuffering children, and wait in faith for a joyful harveſt. In due ſeaſon thou ſhalt reap, if thou faint not. And the croſs is intended to keep thee from fainting; becauſe thy Father ſends it for the increaſe and for the ſtrengthening of thy faith. Read and ſtudy what he ſays to thee upon this point. Learn and inwardly digeſt it. In time of trouble thou wilt find great comfort from depending upon the promiſe of the Father to give thee an happy iſſue. Meditate then upon the ſcriptures, in which he has declared his gracious purpoſes in afflicting his children, namely,

Firſt, it is for the trial of faith. God gives it, and then tries it; that it may appear to be his grace, that men may ſee it, and honor him for it, and that it may grow by uſe, which is as neceſſary to ſpiritual, as exerciſe is to bodily growth.

Trial

Trial ſhews the truth, and brings forth the power of grace, and is thereby a matter of great joy: as the apoſtle James teſtifies writing to the twelve tribes in their diſperſion and affliction. "My "brethren, count it ALL JOY, when ye fall into "divers temptations, knowing this, that the try-"ing of your faith worketh patience; but let "patience have its perfect work, that ye may be "perfect, and entire, wanting nothing." God be thanked for this word of ſtrong conſolation. What a precious ſcripture is it! How full of encouragement to the believer to look with delight at *temptations!*---not temptations to ſin, but trials, ſent from God to keep from ſin. When he falls into them by providence, and meets them in the way of duty, then he ſhould judge of them, not from ſenſe, which can feel nothing but ſorrow in afflictions, but he ſhould take account of them from the declared purpoſe of God in ſending them, and he ſhould wait in faith for the bleſſings which they are to produce. God ſays, that they are matter of joy, of ALL JOY, of all true ſpiritual joy---they are not only ſuch in his account, but he alſo makes them ſuch to the believer. Accordingly we read in ſcripture of many who did rejoice in trials. The Hebrews did: For they took JOYFULLY the ſpoiling of their goods. Paul did: I am comforted, ſays he, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation. Nay, he went farther---We GLORY in tribulations. He leaped

leaped for joy with the croſs upon his back. He boaſted and triumphed under it. What the world accounted his worſt, he made his very crown of rejoicing: For he knew and found, that the trial of faith worketh patience: Faith receives the croſs from the Father's love, and learns to bear it after Jeſus: By the grace of the Spirit the bearing of it, as it exerciſes, ſo it improves patience. The believer becomes more acquainted with it. Uſe, we ſay, makes perfect. He learns, where the ſtrength to bear is---from whence his comforts are to flow--and from whoſe hand the bleſſed iſſue is to be received. He waits therefore with ſweet ſubmiſſion to his Father's will, that patience may have its perfect work, that by trials it may be exerciſed, by ſharper trials it may be improved, and by daily trials it may appear to be the genuine grace of the Spirit, perfect and entire, lacking nothing. This the believer aims at. He would have every thing that belongs to true patience, and growth in it; he would have it refined by every fiery trial, and made purer and brighter, that it may hold out, till it have done its perfect work. The apoſtle Peter gives the ſame encouragement to the ſame afflicted Hebrews: He exhorts them to faith and patience under their ſufferings in theſe words---" Ye are kept by the " power of God through faith unto ſalvation, " ready to be revealed in the laſt time; wherein " ye greatly rejoice, though now for a ſeaſon, if " need

" need be, ye are in heavineſs through mani-
" fold temptations; that the trial of your faith
" being much more precious than of gold that
" periſheth, though it be tried with fire, might
" be found unto praiſe and honor and glory at
" the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt." What treaſures of love are laid open in this ſcripture! Read, O my ſoul, and adore the exceeding riches of thy Father's grace. He knew how needful afflictions were, both for the fleſh and for the ſpirit, and therefore he appointed thee thy portion, and he has in mercy informed thee of his deſign in them. He has revealed his will for the ground of thy faith, that when he ſends them, thou mighteſt experience the bleſſings promiſed to his ſuffering children. The belief of his love in contriving and in proportioning them to the ability given thee to bear them would adminiſter matter of joy in ſorrow, and by truſting to his faithfulneſs thou wouldſt greatly rejoice; thy joy would ſo far exceed thy ſorrow. The heavineſs is but for a ſeaſon---the joy for ever. The heavineſs only during the trial of faith---the joy increaſed by that very trial. The trial was only to prove the truth of faith, and to evidence the power of it---not to weaken, but to ſtrengthen it---not to deſtroy, but to refine it. The refiner does not intend to loſe one atom of his gold, but puts it into the fire to purge away the droſs. So does God. When he hath tried me, ſays Job, I

ſhall

ſhall come forth as gold. He was tried in the fire, and his faith was found unto praiſe and honor and glory. Therefore he is ſet forth for an example of ſuffering affliction and of patience. Behold, we account them happy, not who ſuffer, but who endure ſuffering. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have ſeen the end of the Lord; that the Lord abounds in compaſſion, and is of tender mercy. O my ſoul, wait upon the ſame Lord, and he will bring all thy trials to the ſame bleſſed end. He has the ſame pity and mercy to thee, as he had to Job. Thou haſt the ſame reaſon to believe it, as he had. Thy faith is tried in the fire, as he was, that it may come out of it like gold. The trial was appointed in perfect love, and is to produce the greateſt bleſſings of love. Thy God has moſt gracious deſigns towards thee in putting thee into the fire. It is to try thy faith; whether thou canſt truſt him there. It is to improve thy faith by the trial, that thou mayeſt truſt him more. If thou haſt truſting faith, it is to teach thee patient faith. It is a hard leſſon to learn to truſt againſt ſenſe and carnal reaſon, and to ſay, This croſs is good for me, I deſire to ſubmit, and to take it patiently at the hand of God. O it is very hard to believe that there is nothing but love in every ſuffering, and it is harder to find it ſo, while ſuffering. And yet the Spirit of God declares there

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is nothing but love in it, and by believing thou wilt certainly find it. May every trial of thy faith eſtabliſh it, and thereby bring forth

Secondly, The bleſſed fruit of patience. The croſs does good to faith: becauſe by it God teaches his children to bear up, and to hold out, truſting to his promiſes and waiting in hope for his fulfilling them, and thus it exerciſes patience. Which is a grace of the Spirit, learned only in the ſchool of Chriſt, and therefore the giver of it among his other high titles is called, *the God of patience*. He firſt enables his afflicted children to believe what he has ſaid of his love in afflicting them, and then to wait for the experience of his love under their afflictions. This waiting quietly, without giving way to ſenſe, or unbelief is patience. Faith is tried, and ſtands the trial. Tribulation comes, faith is exerciſed with it, but holds faſt its confidence in the word of God, and thereby has full proof of the faithfulneſs of God. This worketh patience---a quiet ſubmiſſion to the divine will---and an holy ſubjection to the divine rod. The fleſh murmurs, ſelf-will repines, ſelf-indulgence rebels; but faith looks up for the promiſed ſtrength and by it conquers them. It ſtops their mouths with a Huſh---Be ſtill and know that he is God---He is my ſovereign and my Father---this affliction indeed is not for the preſent joyous, but rather grievous---nevertheleſs

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it comes from his love, love guides his hand, love will bring good out of it---O that all within me may ſubmit to his will, and bleſs his name.

But the croſs is hard and painful; fleſh and blood cannot bear it. True, but grace can. To endure is the proper work of patience. It endures by truſting to the word of God, and by receiving from him the promiſed ſtrength. What cannot ſuch a grace endure? When God ſays, "Fear not, I will be with thee, when thou "goeſt through the fire;" the believer is hereby forewarned of the fire, and when he is called to go through it, he expects the preſence of his God, that if the buſh burn, it may not be conſumed. How comfortably does the apoſtle Peter ſpeak of this to the ſuffering Hebrews? "Beloved, think it not ſtrange concerning the "fiery trial, which is to try you, as though "ſome ſtrange thing had come unto you; but "rejoice, inaſmuch as ye are partakers of "Chriſt's ſufferings, that when his glory ſhall be "revealed, ye may be glad alſo with exceeding joy." He would have them to be accuſtomed to the croſs, it being the only way to the crown. There is nothing new or ſtrange in it. All the crowned heads in heaven carried it, while they were upon earth: yea the king of ſaints went bearing it before them. There never was ſorrow like unto his ſorrow: and yet for the joy that

that was ſet before him, he endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame. Take up thy croſs, O my ſoul, and follow him. Look unto Jeſus. He will give thee ſtrength. He has taken the curſe and wrath out of thy ſuffering. Thou wilt ſee it the fruit of his love to thee, and it will be the means of engaging thy love to him. What, if it be a burning fiery furnace: Is it not almighty love, which calls thee to go into it? Not to hurt thee, but to try thee, to give thee happy proof of the ſoundneſs of thy faith, and of the power of thy patience. He would have thee to know, that thy patience truſting to his tried word is invincible: that no blow can beat it, no fire can burn it, from Chriſt. He would bring thee to experience what the prophet did, when he ſaid —"Thy word is tried to the uttermoſt, and thy "ſervant loveth it." The good word of God was tried, as far as it could be, and the trial proved its truth, and therefore he had freſh reaſon to love it. The trial increaſed his confidence in the truth, and his experience in the ſweetneſs of its promiſes; thereby his patience was confirmed, and he could rejoice, inaſmuch as he was a partaker of Chriſt's ſufferings, both of their infinite ſufficiency, and alſo of their mighty efficacy to ſave. By enjoying theſe bleſſings under the croſs, his heart was happy in the joy ſet before him. He had the earneſt and the foretaſte

of

of heaven: for he knew, that when the glory of Jeſus ſhould be revealed, he ſhould be glad with exceeding joy.

But the carnal mind is ready to complain--This would be true, if the ſuffering was ſhort, but it is long, as well as hard---I have borne up a great while, but now my patience is quite tired out---I am ready to give all up, being weary of my life with the length of my trials. How many have I known in this melancholy caſe? Fair bloſſoms in the mild and gentle ſpring. In fine weather and ſmiling ſunſhine they looked beautiful, and gave hopes of their being in the tree of life, and of their growing and ripening upon it. But alas! a trying time came, a bleak cold north wind, and a very ſharp piercing froſt --like leaves in autumn, down fell the promiſing bloom. My heart has mourned again and again at the fall of one and another, and mourns while I am writing this, over ſeveral now living, who have forſaken God and his ways for the world and its delights. They met with trouble, and it was too much for them. They were tempted, and they had not ſtrength to reſiſt. The reaſon is thus aſſigned---" He that received ſeed into ſtony " places, the ſame is he that heareth the word, " and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he " not root in himſelf, but endureth for a while: " for when tribulation or perſecution ariſeth be- " cauſe of the word by and by he is offended."

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He is offended and falls away, becauſe he had no root: and they, who have root, are too often tempted to be offended at the croſs. They find it very difficult to bear up under it. Natural infirmity, remaining corruption, and ſtrength of temptation make pain and ſuffering grievous to the fleſh: yea, when they are forced to bear the croſs long, and it is very heavy, they are apt to murmur and fret, grow diſcontented, are tempted to unbelief, and if they give way to it, to deſpair. How neceſſary is it then, that they ſhould be enabled to poſſeſs their ſouls in patience under their great and many trials? To which end nothing can contribute more effectually, than a ſettled faith in the word and promiſe of a reconciled God. This will ſtay and quiet the ſoul, when trouble comes. It is the chaſtening of my Lord, ſays the believer---my loving Father ſends it for good---He is only trying my faith and patience, and the trial will end well---it is grievous indeed at preſent, and I go on my way weeping, but I have my ſupports now, and I ſhall ſoon reap a joyful harveſt. I have a faithful promiſe for it, which is a conſtant cordial and keeps up my ſpirits. My God will be with me as long as the trial laſts---he ſays he will. I believe him, and therefore expect his promiſed preſence and ſtrength, till faith and patience have their perfect work. Such a cordial the apoſtle James gives to the Hebrews. They wanted

wanted it much. They were greatly oppreſſed by the rich, and ſome of them were perſecuted even unto death. " Be patient therefore, bre-
" thren, ſays he, unto the coming of the Lord:
" behold the huſbandman waiteth for the pre-
" cious fruit of the earth, and hath long pa-
" tience for it, until he receive the early and
" the latter rain: be ye alſo patient: eſtabliſh
" your hearts: for the coming of the Lord
" draweth nigh." He puts great ſtreſs upon the Lord's coming: Yet a very little while and your Lord will come to appear for you: It's true you are in a fiery trial, but your God calls you to it; and it may ſeem to you a long trial, but he has promiſed you grace ſufficient to bear it: Truſt him then, and he will keep you patient. He knows your frame and temper, and bids you look about you. See, how the huſbandman waits, having only a general promiſe, that ſeed time and harveſt ſhall not fail; and is it not more reaſonable that you ſhould wait with patience the end of the Lord. He ſows his ſeed and leaves it. It endures much hard weather, froſt and ſnow, rough winds and wintry ſtorms. Summer comes, but he muſt ſtill wait: His corn is in ear, yet it is liable to ſuffer from long drought and from blights, and to be beat down with heavy thunder ſhowers; but he has long patience. At laſt he is not diſappointed of his

hope. He reaps the precious fruit of the earth, and gathers in his joyful harveſt. Behold, O my ſoul, and imitate. How ſtrong is his faith! Is thine like his? God has only ſaid, that the ſeaſons ſhall not fail: He has not ſaid, that the harveſt in every field and country ſhall not fail, yet the farmer ſows in faith and waits in patience. But the promiſe is ſure to thee--" He " that believeth ſhall never be confounded," and doſt thou believe this with a hope that maketh not aſhamed? He has long patience: How is thine? Art thou not weary and faint in thy mind, eſpecially when the courſe of providence ſeems to run counter to thy hope? Canſt thou hold thee ſtill in the Lord, and abide patiently upon him, when he chaſtiſes thee, and ſeems in anger to caſt thee off? He waits long for an harveſt of periſhing things, and canſt not thou wait to have thy fruit unto holineſs and the end everlaſting life? O what need haſt thou of patience! Seek it, pray for it, beg of thy God to eſtabliſh thy heart: that thou mayeſt be rooted and grounded in faith: And if troubles come great and heavy, thou mayeſt poſſeſs thy ſoul in patience, ſo long as the Lord ſhall pleaſe to exerciſe thee with them. And never forget that he will certainly come, and quickly. Let this promiſe keep thee from fainting. He will come in with his ſupports; he will adminiſter his comforts under the croſs; he will remove it

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in due ſeaſon. What can be required for the eſtabliſhing of thy heart, which is not promiſed to thee in this ſcripture? "Caſt not away "therefore your confidence, which hath great "recompence of reward: For ye have need of "patience, that after ye have done the will of "God, ye might receive the promiſe: For it is "but a very little while, and he that ſhall come "will come, and will not tarry. Wait then on "the Lord, O my ſoul; be of good courage, and "he ſhall ſtrengthen thine heart: Wait, I ſay, "on the Lord."

Perhaps thou art ready to reply--I have waited long, but am ſtill to learn: for my trials are ſo various, that as ſoon as I have been well exerciſed with one ſort, preſently it is changed, and another comes, to which I was not accuſtomed--And this continually, like Job's meſſengers; one after another, and ſtill the laſt brings a ſadder meſſage than the former--Hard and long trials I have endured, but this conſtant change of them wearies me out; they come ſo unexpected, they find me ſo unprepared, they ſo harraſs my troubled mind, that I am ready to ſink under them---frequently I am tempted to think, that if God loved me, he would not delight in afflicting me in this manner.

Thus the carnal mind is apt to reaſon againſt God and his ways: But when the believer goes into the ſanctuary and conſults the oracle, he

receives an anſwer of grace and peace, and is ſatisfied that this change of trials is nothing new with God. It is his uſual method of training up his children in faith and patience. He appoints troubles for the exerciſe, and all ſorts of troubles for the improvement of their graces. The captain of their ſalvation was made perfect through ſufferings. So are all the ſoldiers of Chriſt Jeſus. It was the remark of one of his champions---MANY are the troubles of the righteous. The apoſtle James ſpeaking of the perſecuted Hebrews ſays, they had DIVERS temptations, different one from another; and his brother Peter tries to comfort them under their MANIFOLD afflictions, many in number, ſucceeding as faſt as wave follows after wave, and of many kinds, ſome diſtreſſed them in their bodies, others in their minds, in their character, in their ſubſtance, in their families, in every way that affliction could be felt. Patience is the grace ſuited to all theſe trials: Becauſe it bears them in the ſtrength of God: For it conſiſts in truſting to his ſure word of promiſe, and believing it againſt ſenſe and feeling: Faith ſays, this preſent trial comes from the love of my covenant God: Patience ſays, then I will bear it, till he bring it to a good iſſue. Whatever the trial be, patience has the ſame promiſe, and the ſame promiſe-keeping God to truſt in. If he ſend variety of trials, it is only to give a variety of proofs,

proofs, that he is faithful, who hath promiſed. He knows we have divers diſeaſes, which muſt have divers remedies to heal them. We have manifold evils in us, which require manifold afflictions to ſubdue them. And our God intends to give us many bleſſings, and he appoints many troubles to bring us to the enjoyment of them. All theſe are gracious diſpenſations, mercifully contrived, and ſeaſonably adminiſtered, that patience may learn to bear, and may learn to perſevere in bearing. God changes the trial. Patience has a new leſſon, and a new opportunity of improvement. A good teacher brings his ſcholars forward, and when they are gone through one book and are well grounded in it, then he advances them to another: When they have learned Latin, he puts them into Greek. But he does not change their ſtudies out of ill-will or hatred to his ſcholars. They had rather be at play, than minding their books; and they had rather get but one leſſon, and be ſaying it over from day to day; but the maſter knows what is beſt for them, and he keeps them to their work. God trains up his ſcholars in various exerciſes, but all for their improvement. He does not conſult what would pleaſe them, but he changes the leſſon, as he ſees needful. He knows when their faith wants confirming, when their patience needs eſtabliſhing, and therefore in much mercy he ſends a new trial for the growth of thoſe

graces. Leſt they ſhould miſtake his meaning in varying his trials ſo often, he gives them this general rule---" There hath no temptation taken " you, but ſuch as is common to man: but God " is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be " tempted above that ye are able, but will with " the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that " ye may be able to bear it." The Father will exerciſe his children with no trial, but ſuch as is common to man; and he will enable them to bear it; and will make a way for them to eſcape. How ſhould theſe conſiderations ſilence their murmurings? If the trial be new to them, yet it is common to man. If it be hard to bear, yet grace is almighty to ſtrengthen patience. If it laſt long, yet it ſhall end well. How convincing are theſe reaſons? How patiently ſhould believers, influenced by them, ſubmit to the chaſtening of the Lord? And yet there is ſtill unbelief in them, which will be urging freſh complaints, and ſtirring up impatience.

The poor ſufferer, feeling his ſmart, is apt to think---Any croſs, but mine, would be tolerable---I ſhould not ſay one word againſt God, if he tried me with any other; but this cuts me to the heart---Oh it is a very agony both to my fleſh and ſpirit---there is nothing like it---it is ſo exactly calculated to croſs my temper, to hurt me in the tendereſt part, and to rob me of my moſt beloved gratification, that it is the very thing

thing in the world, from which I could have wiſhed to be exempted---Any croſs, Lord, but this.

Nay but, O man, who art thou that replieſt thus againſt God? Hold thy tongue as it were with a bridle. Let not ſelf-will murmur, and folly ſpeak againſt the chaſtening of the Lord. He ſays that he is dealing with thee as with ſons. Where is thy faith then? that ſenſe and feeling ſhould be permitted to plead, and to be heard againſt the witneſs of God in his word. Where is thy patience? that thou canſt not bear the preſent croſs, but wouldſt take up any other. Alas! alas! miſtaken man---what canſt thou bear in thine own ſtrength? Thou feeleſt the ſmart of thy preſent croſs, and it makes thee peeviſh and fretful: The ſmart of any other would have the very ſame effect. A leſs than this, the leaſt thing in the world, that oppoſes thy will, would ſtir up thine impatience. Obſerve thy temper, how it catches fire at any little oppoſition from men. The ſame temper will be inflamed and rage, when God chaſtiſes thee, if thou refuſe to receive his correction. Thy rebel-will is the cauſe of thy pain, and makes thy croſs ſo bitter: For if God's will and thine were one, there could be no croſs; but his will is almighty, and yet thou reſiſteſt it. God puts his yoke upon thee, and thou art like a ſtubborn beaſt, which only hurts and galls itſelf by ſtriving

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and kicking againſt its work. He tries thee with one croſs, and thou art diſſatisfied, thou couldſt contrive a better for thyſelf. Thou wouldſt be thine own lord and governor. Self-will, they ſay, is a ſure guide to ſelf-deſtruction. Beware then of thine own will. When God calls thee to take up any croſs, do not wiſh for another. He ſends this, and to it he requires thy ſubmiſſion. It is thy duty, and thine intereſt to receive it for the exerciſe and for the improvement of thy patience; but inſtead of taking it up quietly, and waiting for the good fruit of it, thou art quarrelling with it, and oppoſing the will of God. O take heed of this vain attempt. It is a ſnare laid for thee. A fatal trap, into which the love of independence ſeduced the firſt man, and which ever ſince eaſily enſnares his poſterity. When thou art tempted to murmur at thy preſent croſs---conſider what it is---meditate a moment upon thy Father's love, who moſt mercifully appointed, who moſt ſeaſonably ſent it---and if it be nothing ſtrange, but common to man, then do not try to ſhift it off, but ſeek the promiſed grace to bear it. There is not a croſs, that he will lay upon thee, but he has laid it before upon others, and it will tend greatly to the peace of thy mind, and to the reſtraining of thine own will, to obſerve how he dealt with them. Take notice then, how he in love exerciſed them with every croſs, that can be laid upon thee, how he

ſupported

ſupported them under it, and what bleſſed fruit they reaped from it.

This is the kingdom of the croſs; and it is the Lord's will, that every diſciple in it ſhould be as his maſter. He has choſen them to ſuffer with him, as well as to reign with him. And therefore intending to call forth his gifts and graces into daily exerciſe, he has honored them with the daily croſs. He ſees it needful often to change it, and he has informed them of his gracious deſigns herein. There is ſcarce any kind of ſuffering, but ſome or other of his people have been tried with it, and he has left promiſes in ſcripture of his ſupport, and of his coming in with comfort, and in due time with deliverance. So that whatever thy croſs be, it is not ſent, O my ſoul, to hinder, but to promote communion with thy God, and to help thee forward in the heavenly way.

Art thou pinched with poverty---a believer, but in diſtreſſed circumſtances? Bleſſed art thou of the Lord. "Hearken, my beloved brother, "hath not God choſen the poor of this world "rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which "he hath promiſed to them that love him?" What a mercy is it to have thine outward eſtate thus appointed for thee by the choice of thy heavenly Father! And the ſame eſtate which he choſe for his beſt beloved. In the exceeding riches of his love he decreed, that thou ſhouldſt be

be poor in this world, as Jeſus was---He knew it was beſt for thee---and he choſe the rich in faith---outward poverty was to be the means of thine improvement in ſpiritual riches---thy want of temporals was to bring thee to live more by faith upon eternal things. O how good is thy God! He ſent thee poverty to enrich thee. It is to bring thee near to God, to keep thee near to him, and to afford thee daily proof of his precious love. Theſe are ſome of the bleſſings of rich faith, and theſe are worth more than all the treaſures of the world. Be content then---thy God will ſupply all thy need. Be thankful---thou art an heir of the kingdom. Bleſs thy God---no creature out of heaven has more reaſon to bleſs him, than thou haſt---He is thine---All things are thine.

Perhaps thou art tried with bodily pain and ſickneſs: Theſe are hard trials. To endure them is the very crown of patience; but ſtrength to endure them is promiſed, and in waiting upon the Lord will be received; ſo that outward pains ſhall produce inward joy. Thus we read: "The Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed "of languiſhing, thou wilt make all his bed in "his ſickneſs." He is weak, God ſtrengthens him. He is ſick, God comforts him. He is in pain, God ſmooths his bed, and he lies patient. Sickneſs cannot be pleaſant in itſelf; but is profitable for its fruits. It is the appointment of God,

God, and teaches ſubmiſſion to his ſovereign will. It comes to the believer with a meſſage of precious love---This bitter cup is ſent from thy heavenly Father, who has many gracious purpoſes to anſwer by thy taking it---He would humble thee and let thee feel what thou art, and what thou deſerveſt---he would mortify the life of ſenſe---He would give occaſion to increaſe faith and to advance patience---Drink it up---There is a rich cordial at the bottom---The taſte of it will draw out thy heart in love to God. Happy ſickneſs! which promotes ſpiritual health. Bleſſed pain! which the kind phyſician often makes the way to pleaſure, yea to the ſweeteſt communications of his love.

Art thou in the fire of perſecution? Are thy friends and relations all in arms againſt thee for leaving them to follow Chriſt? Is thy dependence upon them, and art thou greatly tempted to make ſome compliances, leſt they ſhould caſt thee out, and thou ſhouldſt come to poverty? This may be a fiery trial; but it is a bleſſed one. He will make it ſo, who ſays, "Bleſſed are ye "when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, "and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you "falſly for my ſake. Rejoice, and be exceeding "glad: Becauſe great is your reward in heaven: "For ſo perſecuted they the prophets who were "before you." This perſecution will be ſo far from ſtopping thee in thy way, that it will both

help thee forward, and will alſo make thy journey pleaſant. Thy friends revile thee: Look up to him, who when he was reviled, reviled not again: He will turn their reproach into a bleſſing. They perſecute thee: the goodly fellowſhip of the prophets carried the ſame croſs, and found it no hinderance to their ſpiritual joy. They ſay all manner of evil of thee: Take heed that they ſay it falſly, and for Chriſt's ſake; and if thou ſuffer for him, and art evil ſpoken of for thine attachment to him, then rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is thy reward in heaven. Thou art a ſufferer with him, and thou ſhalt alſo reign with him. Look forward to the promiſed kingdom. Expect it in faith, and the proſpect will give thee at every ſtep joy unſpeakable and full of glory.

Perhaps this perſecution may be carried on to acts of injuſtice, even to the depriving thee of thy property: thou mayeſt ſuffer the loſs of all thy worldly goods for Chriſt's ſake. When God calls thee to this trial, he will give thee ſtrength to bear it, and thou ſhalt be a great gainer by thy loſs. So Paul found it—"I have "ſuffered the loſs of all things, and I do account "them but dung that I may win Chriſt." So it was with the Hebrews—"They took joyfully the "ſpoiling of their goods, knowing in themſelves, "that they had in heaven a better and an en-"during ſubſtance." What love was here! God was

was their portion, and their great reward. He had made them happy in the ſenſe of his love; and to manifeſt the reality, and to demonſtrate the power of it, what great things love can do for his name's ſake, he took away all their earthly delights. Let them go, ſays Paul, I part with them as freely as I would with ſo much dung, for I have experienced that the loſs of them has brought me to nearer fellowſhip with my precious, moſt precious Jeſus. Happy parting, ſay the Hebrews, farewell goods and chattels---we rejoice at the ſpoiling of our goods: becauſe we have got faſter hold of the ſubſtance by the loſs of the ſhadow---outward comforts are gone, but inwardly richly ſupply their place---we are robbed of our earthly poſſeſſions, thank God we cannot be robbed of our better and enduring ſubſtance: for it is reſerved in heaven for us, where no moth or ruſt can corrupt, and where no thieves can break through or ſteal: in this faith we find our hearts free and light and happy in running the race that is ſet before us.

Thy trial may be ſomething ſtill nearer. It may be the loſs of thy deareſt relations. The wife of thy boſom is taken from thee. Thy favourite child is dead, perhaps drowned, or burned, or killed at a ſtroke: the delight of thine eyes is gone, and thine heart is ready to break. All ſorrow is not forbidden, but ſorrowing even

as others, who have no hope. Tears may flow, but chriſtian hope keeps them within their proper bounds: it reſtrains and ſanctifies them. Thy wife is dead: thy child is dead. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. He requires thee to forſake loving wife and children, be they ever ſo dear, if love of them cannot be enjoyed without forfeiting his love. "And there were "great multitudes with Chriſt, and he turned "and ſaid unto them, if any man come unto me, "and hate not his father and mother, and wife "and children, and brethren, and ſiſters, he "cannot be my diſciple." The diſciple gives up himſelf to the maſter's diſpoſal---to learn of him---to believe in him---and to love him. My ſon, ſays he, give me thy heart. He has a right to it, and he will admit of no rival. It is his temple and his throne; in which he alone will be worſhipped and honored. He is a jealous God, and if any love hinder love to him, it muſt be torn from the heart. O diſciple, read this ſcripture, ſtudy it carefully, and it may be the means of ſhewing thee the true cauſe of thy great ſorrow about worldly relations: it is becauſe thou haſt ſo little love to thy beſt relation and friend, Jeſus Chriſt. If thy love to him was what it ſhould be, thy heart would not be ſo grieved at thoſe loſſes; but would in patient ſubmiſſion acknowledge---It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good.

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Perhaps thou art mourning for the loſs of living friends. They have forſaken thee. Old connections, as dear to thee as thine own ſoul, are broken. Perſons, whom thou hadſt known from thy childhood, and with whom thou hadſt grown up in ſtrict friendſhip, are now thine enemies, and become ſo without any offence or fault of thine. They hate thee, becauſe thou art a real chriſtian, and their hatred is harder to bear, becauſe the world joins them in it, and thy name is every where caſt out with contempt.

It muſt be ſo. The decree cannot be altered ---I WILL PUT enmity between the ſeed of the woman, and the ſeed of the ſerpent. God put it, and put it for ever. The enmity broke out, as ſoon as there were two born into the world. Cain hated Abel, and ſlew him. Ever ſince, he that was born after the fleſh perſecuted him that was born after the ſpirit. There has been one, and but one perfect man upon the earth ſince the fall, and the enmity of the world followed him unto death. Leſt we ſhould marvel at its following us, he has forewarned us---" If the world " hate you, ye know that it hated me before it " hated you: if ye were of the world, the world " would love its own, but becauſe ye are not of " the world, but I have choſen you out of the " world, therefore the world hateth you." What a ſtrange reaſon is this! Becauſe I love you, therefore the world hates you. What God chooſes, the

the world rejects. Why then, O my soul, dost thou court its smiles, or fear its frowns? The world, which lieth in wickedness, cannot love thee, and its enmity cannot hurt thee. Remember the words of Jesus---"These things have I "spoken unto you, that in me ye might have "peace: in the world ye SHALL have tribula- "tion, but be of good courage, I have over- "come the world." I have overcome it for you, and I will overcome it in you: tribulation from it shall not hurt your peace in me, but shall increase it: I will make my love the sweeter for its enmity: troubles from it shall be well repaid with my joys: and when it quite casts you out, then will I take you into my bosom, and let you know what the affection of the heavenly bridegroom is.

Why then, O my soul, art thou afraid of such an exchange? Is it not for thy profit to part with the world for Christ, and to give up its joys for his? What greater gain canst thou expect, than to win Christ, and by him to be crucified to this present evil world? Dying to it thou wilt be more alive to him, and therefore happier in him. As other ties are dissolved, thy heart will be knit closer to thy divine lover. Warmed with his precious love, "cloathed with the sun, and the "moon under thy feet" thou wilt hasten thy steps heavenwards; yea, thou wilt be ready to take wing and to fly to the embraces of thy dear,

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ever, infinitely dear Jeſus. Thou wilt want no comment upon the words of the bride the Lamb's wife, but wilt gladly uſe them after her —"Make haſte, my beloved, and be thou like "to a roe, or to a young hart upon the moun- "tains of ſpices."

In former ages the children of God were often deprived of their liberty, caſt into priſons and bound in chains. This ſeems to us an heavy croſs. To be ſhut up in a dark dungeon, put into fetters, and deprived of every worldly comfort, requires great patience: but even this did not ſtop them in their way to heaven, nor in the enjoyment of God by the way. Paul the priſoner of the Lord often mentions it among his higheſt honors, that he was accounted worthy to ſuffer for the name of Chriſt. He and Silas were cruelly beaten with many ſtripes at Philippi, were put into the inner priſon, and their feet faſtened in the ſtocks; but the Lord was with them, and he turned their priſon into a paradiſe: his joy made them forget their wounds and pains: for at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and SANG PRAISES unto God. This has often been the caſe ſince their time: the Lord has often viſited his priſoners, and the light of his countenance has made them happy in their bonds. Indeed we are not called to this kind of ſuffering at preſent; thanks be to his grace. This is a day of ſuch uncommon mercies, that we have more to fear from

from our want of thankfulneſs, than from our want of liberty. I pray God we may not grow licentious, and abuſe our great privileges, but may he enable us ſo to value them and live up to them, that he may be honoured for continuing them to us, and to our poſterity.

In former times alſo believers were often forced to ſeal the teſtimony of Jeſus with their blood. And even this did not ſtop them in their walk, nor hinder their communion with God. Hear one of his martyrs---"The holy Ghoſt witneſſeth, "that bonds and afflictions wait for me in every "city: but none of theſe things move me, nei- "ther account I my life dear unto myſelf, ſo that "I may finiſh my courſe with joy, and the mi- "niſtry, which I have received of the Lord "Jeſus." This was not a vain brag. He ſpake it in humble faith, depending upon his maſter's promiſe, that he would ſtand by him, when his blood ſhould be ſhed, and would make him an happy conqueror in the hour of death. And he was more than conqueror; but the grace, which made him ſo, was not peculiar to, or the privilege of, an apoſtle; the ſame was given to a noble army of martyrs: who overcame ſatan by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their teſtimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death. What a triumph of patience was this! They were enabled to bear any thing, even the loſs of life, rather than ſuffer the loſs of their

their Lord's favor. Examine, O my ſoul, whether thy faith be like theirs. Canſt thou endure, as they did? How is thy patience under the croſs? Read what they went through, who are well reported of by the Holy Ghoſt for their faith, and remember the ſame grace is promiſed to thee to carry thee patiently through all thy ſufferings---" They had trials of cruel mockings " and ſcourgings, yea moreover of bonds and " impriſonments: they were ſtoned, they were " ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with " the ſword; they wandered about in ſheep " ſkins and goat ſkins, being deſtitute, afflicted, " tormented; of whom the world was not wor- " thy, they wandered in deſerts and in mountains, " and in dens and in caves of the earth, and theſe " all obtained a good report through faith." They are celebrated by the holy Spirit for having patiently endured, till they had run their race, and finiſhed their courſe with joy. He ſets their example before thee, that thou ſhouldſt not be ſlothful in running the ſame race, but a follower of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promiſes.

Meditate ſeriouſly, O my ſoul, and reflect again and again upon the great need thou haſt of patience. Remember the croſs lies in thy way to the crown, and thou canſt not avoid it. The Lord has appointed it to be thy portion, and it is entailed upon thee, as much as the

kingdom is. When he exercises and tries thee with it, he does not act merely as a sovereign, but as a Father. He deals with thee, as with sons. His children want, and his children have correction. None are without it. But they find it hard to bear. The will of the flesh is impatient under the cross. Self-love hates it. Carnal reason cannot be reconciled to it. If it be thus with sons, what must it be with bastards? The natural man, when he is brought into great trouble, is like a mad beast. If his pains be sharp and acute, he rages, storms, and blasphemes: if they be also lasting, having no God to go to, he often gives way to despair, and dispatches himself with a pistol, running to hell for relief. O my soul, marvel not at this. If God had left thee to thyself, the same trials might have brought thee to the same unhappy end. How necessary then is patience? without it thou canst not bear the cross, nor hold on thy way under it, nor profit from it. And how necessary are the doctrines before insisted on, for the practice of patience? No one can submit to bear the cross, unless he be first persuaded that God is reconciled to him and loves him in his Son. When he is satisfied of this, he will see all things (the cross among the rest) well ordered for him in the covenant, and all working together for the best. The cross is mercifully sent to make a trial of these doctrines: by it God would manifest

manifeſt the truth and bring forth the power of them, that it may appear they were not learned, as notions, but experienced by his almighty grace. His end is anſwered. The trial of faith eſtabliſhes the peace of God in the conſcience, and confirms the love of God in the heart, and thereby keeps patience waiting for ſtrength to hold out, and for a bleſſed iſſue. The believer made ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus endures patiently. He knows from whom his croſs comes. It is the appointment of his Father; who does not ſend it in hatred. He never afflicts his children, but in perfect love. He never put a heavy croſs upon them to break the back of their patience, but to ſtrengthen it, and to train them up to bear greater burdens. He would teach them their weakneſs, and his ſtrength—their wants, and his ſupplies---he would call forth their faith for the honor of his word---and their patience for the glory of his faithfulneſs. Lord, teach me theſe leſſons. I want the experience of them every day. O my God, make me an humble diſciple in the ſchool of Chriſt. There only can I learn to ſuffer thy will; to thee I come for this grace. Aſſiſt me, O thou Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, in reading thy word, that through patience and comfort of the ſcriptures I may have hope. Enable me to meditate night and day on the doctrines of grace revealed in them, and to mix faith with them, that I may

be ſtrong in the patience of hope. O merciful God and Father, I deſire to be ſtrengthened mightily by thy Spirit in the inner man to bear thy croſs. I would live in a continual dependence upon thine arm to carry me through every trial. O thou God of patience and conſolation, enable me to bear thy croſs daily to the praiſe of the glory of thy grace, and to bear it patiently to the end, that I may finiſh my courſe with joy. Be it unto thy ſervant according to thy word, wherein thou haſt cauſed me to put my truſt *Amen*, ſo be it Lord, *Amen*.

To receive benefit from afflictions is a great bleſſing. To ſuffer them with a reſigned will, yea to rejoice in them, as if all the joy in the world was come to us, is contrary to ſenſe and feeling; to carnal reaſon and to human philoſophy; therefore our heavenly Father has graciouſly informed his children of his love in afflicting them: Theſe informations are the ground of their faith, and were given to ſilence murmuring in their hearts, and to keep them waiting patiently for the promiſed fruits of ſuffering. Among which this is a

THIRD, and not the leaſt, namely, the crucifying of the fleſh, and the deadening of it in thoſe affections and luſts, which, if not daily mortified, ſhould ſtop the believer in his walk, and would hinder his holy communion with God. When faith has been tried, and is come out

out of the fire, proved to be the faith of God's elect, and when patience has gone through the fiery furnace and has found no harm, then it is the Father's will to advance and to improve his children in the doctrine of the croſs. They have a carnal mind ſtill, which is enmity againſt God —a body of ſin—an old man of ſin—the fleſh in them luſting againſt the ſpirit. This their fleſhly nature, which doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated, is the greateſt enemy to their holy walk with God in conſtant peace, and growing love: Becauſe it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The life of ſenſe in them is always oppoſing the life of God. Hence the continual war between nature and grace, which if a man does not find in himſelf, he may depend upon it, he either never was alive to God, or elſe at that time he is dead to God. If he be living by the faith of the Son of God, he will alſo be fighting the good fight of faith againſt all the enemies of his ſalvation. He will never think of putting off the whole armor of God until he put off the body of ſin and of death: And until that day come, he will be ſtriving for the maſtery over his body, that he may keep it under and bring it into ſubjection. How abſolutely neceſſary this ſtriving is, appears from the tender compaſſion of our God and Father, who has appointed and decreed in covenant love all the croſſes, which

were

were to be laid upon our rebel-nature, and which were to be kept upon it, till death. It is his holy will hereby to reſtrain its affections, to mortify its luſts, to hedge up its way by thorns and afflictions, and by theſe means he would weaken its power. Is not this mercy unſpeakable? And what more likely method could he contrive thus to crucify the fleſh, than to put it, and to keep it upon the croſs? For as the ſinful nature is deadened the new man is renewed day by day. The one grows more alive by the mortification of the other. The ſubduing of unbelief, pride, and ſelf-ſeeking is the ſtrengthening of faith, humility, and glorifying God. This command therefore is frequently given to believers---Put off the old man---put on the new---mortify your members which are upon the earth---crucify the fleſh with its affections and luſts. And this is ſpoken to believers high in grace, as high as ever any went, or can go. The Spirit of God ſays to the SAINTS at Rome---"Let not ſin reign "in your mortal body, that ye ſhould obey it in "the luſts thereof, neither yield ye your mem- "bers as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto "ſin." The infallible Spirit ſpeaks to the SAINTS at Epheſus---"Put off concerning the "former converſation the old man, who is corrupt "according to the deceitful luſts; and put on the "new man." The ſame precept is given by the ſame Spirit to the SAINTS at Coloſs---"Mortify "your

" your members which are upon the earth." This is an holy war; and all the ſaints of God are engaged in it. They are fighting againſt every thing ſinful, but more particularly watching under arms againſt their own corrupt nature, which is their hardeſt warfare: Becauſe there is no releaſe from it, and it is carried on by continual ſelf denial, by reſiſting the affections and luſts of the old man, and by oppoſing his giving up the members of his body, as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin. But as good ſoldiers of Chriſt Jeſus they reſiſt unto blood ſtriving againſt ſin. The captain of their ſalvation is always on their ſide to encourage them with his promiſes, and to help them with his ſtrength. He intends to lead them on conquering and to conquer, therefore he lays the croſs upon their corruptions, as the moſt effectual means of ſubduing them, and to reconcile them to it, he ſpeaks unto them, as unto children—

My ſon, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Lord. I do not afflict thee in hatred, but in covenant love. My deſign is to mortify the body of ſin, and therefore I give thee this wholeſome phyſic. Thou haſt many bad humors and corruptions, for which I have appointed this ſovereign medicine. Truſt my ſkill---believe my love---depend upon mine arm---and thou wilt infallibly find it profitable to the ſpirit however painful

painful to the flesh. Wait, and the end shall be blessed.

To this truth the prophet Isaiah bears a clear testimony. He explains the Lord's design in afflicting his people, and tells them, it was to purge them from their iniquity, to keep them from the love of sin, and to restrain the practice of it. He afflicted them in mercy: But he afflicted their enemies in justice. Hath he smitten Israel, as he smote those that smote him? No, he has not. Or is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him? No, he chastises his in love; he has appointed the measure, the time, the degree of their correction. "In measure when it shooteth forth, thou wilt "debate with it; he stayeth his rough wind in "the day of his east wind: by this (moderate "affliction) therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob "be purged, and this is all the fruit to take "away his sin."---to keep him back from sin in general, and from the sin of idolatry in particular, as it follows in the prophet---"When he "maketh all the stones of the altar like chalk "stones that are beaten in sunder, then the "groves and images shall not stand up." The altar, at which they offered their idol-worship, shall be broken down, like stones burnt in pieces for lime, and the groves and images shall not stand up, but shall be broken down also. These

happy

happy effects shall be brought about by sanctified affliction—iniquity shall be purged—sin shall be restrained—idolatry shall be thrown down. And God says, this shall be ALL the fruit and end of his chastening. He tells his people of his design, that they might know their affliction would bring forth good fruit, and that they might wait patiently for the fulfilling of his promise. Blessed are all they that wait for him: they shall never be disappointed of their hope.

How gracious is God in his dealings with his children! He provides the best for them, informs them of it, and because they have a fallen nature opposite to his holy mind and will, an enemy to his glory and to their own peace, he acquaints them with his design in subduing it. He appoints affliction for this end. It is the chastening of the Lord. He promises them strength to bear it, and comfort under it. Nothing but good shall flow from it. Iniquity, their worst enemy, shall be crucified: Actual sin, springing from the iniquity of their nature, shall be mortified: the heart shall be deadened to its old idols, and as it dies to them it shall be happier in the love of God. O blessed cross! what mercies dost thou bring with thee? Is not that blessed indeed, which under God produces such unspeakable mercies? Take it up then, O my soul, bear it patiently, and expect the choicest

blessings

bleſſings of the Father's love from it. Why doſt thou refuſe? It is heavy. It is painful. True, but what makes it ſo? The burden is from thy rebel will. The pain comes from thy corruption unwilling to be mortified. Take it up in faith, and thou wilt find ſtrength enough to bear it, and bleſſings enow to make it a matter of all joy. Lord God, reconcile me to my daily croſs. May thy will in it be done. Mortify ſin, weaken its power, deaden its affections and luſts. Only Lord, whatever croſs thou ſendeſt, give grace with it, that I may bear it patiently, and may wait for its promiſed fruit. Thou knoweſt what would ſtop me in my heavenly journey, if it be my boſom favorite, the deareſt object of my love, O tear it from my heart. Thou haſt given me a deſire to have every rival dethroned. O come, and reign alone in me, almighty Jeſus, and ſubdue whatever oppoſes thy lawful government. My Saviour and my God, make all within me feel the power of thy croſs. Crucify the body of ſin. Spare nothing that would hinder my walking with thee, or would deprive me of thy friendſhip and favors. I bleſs thee, I worſhip thee, I glorify thee for this infinite grace, that thou haſt made me willing to have all mine idols pulled down. On thee I depend every moment for keeping them down. O my loving Jeſus, carry on thy work, and in thine own way ſubdue ſin in me: let me be

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planted together in the likeneſs of thy death, that I may be alſo in the likeneſs of thy reſurrection—Dead to ſin, but alive to God. I aſk this for thy great name's ſake. Let it be thy good pleaſure to hear and anſwer. I believe thou wilt. I have thy word for it. There I reſt. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

With this faith review thy mercies. Conſider, O my ſoul, what a good God has done for thee, and what greater things he has ſtill in ſtore. He has in ſome meaſure reconciled thee to his croſs. Thou art convinced, it is thy Father's appointment, contrived for the beſt by his infinite love, and ſettled on thee for thy richeſt portion in time---He ſends it for the trial of thy faith, that it may be found unto praiſe and honor and glory---for the exerciſe and for the improvement of thy patience---for the mortifying of the body of ſin, and for the deadening of the life of ſenſe. This is the will of thy moſt loving and tender Father. He ſends the croſs to be the means of theſe bleſſings. Certainly then it cannot hinder thy walk with him, but in all theſe reſpects will tend to keep thee in the way, and to help thee forward in it, and thus

Fourthly, It will aſſiſt and promote thy holy fellowſhip and communion with God. This is the principal thing in religion. We fell from God by ſin, and it is the greateſt mercy to be brought back to him again. In this point all

religions fail, but the chriſtian. Chriſt is the way. No one cometh to the Father, but by him: for there is ſalvation in no other. He only can forgive ſin: he only can juſtify ſinners. And this way was contrived in the covenant of the Trinity for the higheſt diſplay of their divine perfections: Which begin to be manifeſted, when the Spirit of life enters into the ſinner, and quickens him; when the Spirit of adoption enables him to truſt in the atonement and obedience of Immanuel, and thereby to ſee God reconciled, and to call him, Abba, Father. With this faith in Jeſus he expects from the Father's love all his promiſed mercies. Thus he has fellowſhip with the Father and the Son by the holy Spirit. He ſtands related to the eternal Three in their covenant offices, and he receives freely in believing the covenant bleſſings of each.

Among theſe bleſſings the croſs is not the leaſt: for it is mercifully appointed to be the means of bringing ſinners to this divine fellowſhip. They go on ſtubbornly after their own hearts, and in the error of their own ways, until the Lord ſend ſome trouble to ſtop them. They look wiſhfully at the guilded cup of pleaſure, and drink greedily of its ſweets without any fear of the deadly poiſon mixed up with it. But when God convinces of ſin, then come ſorrow: they feel the poiſon working in a ſenſe of guilt, and dread of puniſhment, which teach the want of a ſaviour, and

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are a good ſchoolmaſter to bring them unto Chriſt. So God dealt with the chief of the Old Teſtament ſinners---a giant in iniquity, who ſurpaſſed all that were before him in Jeruſalem for idolatry and blood ſhedding. The Lord ſent his prophets to warn him of his guilt, but he would not hearken. He hardened his heart, till the Lord brought upon him the captains of the hoſt of the king of Aſſyria, who took Manaſſeh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon: And when he was in affliction, he beſought the Lord his God, and humbled himſelf greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him, and he was intreated of him, and heard his ſupplication, and brought him again to Jeruſalem into his kingdom: then Manaſſeh knew that the Lord he was God. His caſe was not ſingular. It is a common thing with the Lord to ſend affliction to make ſin bitter, that he may lead his people to true ſorrow for it, and that they may ſeek until they find ſalvation. And when they have found it, he ſtill uſes the croſs to keep them near unto himſelf. Indeed the croſs alone has not this effect, but rather the contrary. The natural man has his fretfulneſs ſtirred up by ſuffering, and cannot help murmuring at the will of God. But grace ſanctifies ſuffering. God makes it a bleſſing to his children,

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as by it he exercifes their faith in fuch general promifes, as thefe.

If God fend great and many troubles, they fhall not feparate believers from him: becaufe he will then be with them; as he fpake unto Ifrael---" Fear not to go down into Egypt, for " I will there make of thee a great nation, I " will go down with thee into Egypt." It was the houfe of bondage, in which the taſkmaſters heavily afflicted his defcendents with their burdens, but the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. So it was with the Ifrael of God. They need not fear any affliction: for their God has promifed to be with them in it, and by it to make them great chriſtians; the more they are afflicted the more fhall their graces multiply and grow---" I will be with " thee in trouble, fays God---I will redeem, I " will fave thee from all thy troubles---many are " the troubles of the righteous, but I will de- " liver thee out of them all---yea, when thou " paſſeſt through the water, and through the " fire, I will be with thee, and will preſerve " thee from all evil---I will make all thefe things " work together for thy good." Thefe promifes are a great fupport to faith: for God engages to be with his children in every affliction. He does not intend that any fhould feparate them from him, but that all fhould keep them near to himſelf.

himſelf. He ſays he will be with them; they therefore expect his preſence, and if their afflictions be very great, they may on good grounds wait for his time of deliverance. And as his word cannot be broken, their truſt in it will be confirmed, and their hearts will be eſtabliſhed in waiting upon the Lord. If their afflictions continue long he is with them all the time, making them ſenſible of their own weakneſs, and putting forth his promiſed ſtrength, both that they may endure, and may alſo perſevere in enduring: thus he improves their patience. And becauſe they have ſtill a carnal nature, which cannot bear the croſs, God therefore keeps it upon them, in order to crucify the fleſh with its affections and luſts, that as they die unto ſin they may live unto righteouſneſs. Such is the declared purpoſe of God in afflicting his children: he would hereby cheriſh theſe graces in them, by which communion with him is kept up; and as theſe grow, communion with him will grow in proportion. Faith will look more at the truth, and live more upon the faithfulneſs of God. Patience will depend more on his arm, and the leſs happineſs the believer can find in the creature, he will ſeek and will find the more in his God. The mortifying of the old man will of courſe make the new man more alive: for as the power of the croſs of Chriſt is laid upon the former,

former, the power of the life of Chriſt will be experienced in the latter.

But ſuch is the goodneſs of God to his children under the croſs, that he has given them ſeveral very particular and expreſs promiſes, in order to ſtrengthen their faith and patience. He has ſhewn them what fellowſhip they are to expect with the eternal Three in their covenant offices; for promoting which he moſt mercifully provided the croſs. O my ſoul, attend to this: carefully ſurvey this rich contrivance of divine love, and when the croſs is ſent, take it up in faith, and expect to be a partaker of its covenant bleſſings.

Remember, it is laid upon thee to promote communion with thy God and Saviour. The appointed trial comes. It is to give thee proof of the ſoundneſs of thy faith in Jeſus, and to let thee ſee by experience, that thou haſt not believed in vain. Thou haſt fled to him for refuge, from ſin and guilt, from wrath and hell: He took thee into his protection; and now thy ſafety in him is to be attacked. It will be ſeen, that the foundation upon which thou ſtandeſt will bear thee up in an hour of temptation. If thou haſt indeed fellowſhip with him in his glorious ſalvation, it will now be made manifeſt to thy great profit. The croſs is laid upon thee, an heavy, a bitter croſs: it deprives thee of all

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ſenſible comfort; and is kept upon thee till thou haſt no proſpect of any. Hope in creature-comfort is failed. This is a ſweet ſeaſon for ſpiritual communion with thy Jeſus. He has deadened the enjoyment of other things, that thy heart might be happier in him; therefore now thou art to bring the principles, laid down in the former chapters, into practice. Here is a fair opportunity to make uſe of them: for without them a man muſt ſink under ſuch a croſs; but through faith in the righteouſneſs of thy God and Saviour thou wilt not only have powerful arguments, but wilt alſo have powerful grace, to bear thy ſufferings, patient under them, and thankful for them:

Under them thou wilt be tried--Is it good ground, upon which I have built my hope of ſalvation? Is it the rock of ages? Does it bear me up ſafe, and keep me unſhaken in this time of trouble? Yes, bleſſings, eternal bleſſings on my precious Jeſus: I have fled to him for refuge, and he has ſet my feet upon a rock, that can never be moved: Chriſt my paſſover is ſacrificed for me: in the blood of ſprinkling I have put my truſt, and I am ſafe from the deſtroyer: he is my propitiation, in whom I have redemption through faith in his blood: He is mine advocate alſo with the Father, ſtanding in his preſence as my ſurety: while the Father ſees him and loves him, he will ſee me in him and love me with

the same love: Jesus is mine atonement with him, my righteousness, my sanctification, and my full redemption. O thou most lovely loving Jesus, I have often been happy in the sense of mine interest in thee, but never so happy as now. This cross is sanctified indeed: for it has removed what hindered my communion with thee, and has brought me to seek thy presence, and to enjoy thy supports, and thy comforts. I was foolish enough to wish it might pass from me; but this was mine infirmity. Pardon it my sweet Jesus, and accept mine unfeigned thanks for thy late mercies. Never in my life did I find the virtue of thy sacrifice in the peace of my conscience, nor had I such intimate communion with thee in thy finished salvation, as I have had under this cross. It tried me indeed, but the trial was to thy glory, and to my profit. I am now more satisfied than ever, that thy salvation is infinitely perfect, and that I have my share in it: I have it indeed now: for I am a partaker of the things which accompany salvation. I am making use of them---I find their reality---I enjoy their sweetness---blessing and thanks and praise without ceasing be unto thee, my adorable God and Saviour.

Is it not, O my soul, thy fervent prayer, that thou mayest live in holy friendship with Jesus? Why then dost thou fear his cross, which is his appointed way and means of improving thine intimacy

intimacy with him, and likeneſs to him? O ſtudy the diſcovery of his love in the ſcriptures: and take particular notice of the promiſes, which he has made to his ſuffering brethren. Read, mark them, mix faith with them, that they may be fulfilled in thine experience. Remember, thou canſt not ſuffer, but by his will, to which he expects ſubmiſſion: he ſends the croſs to teach thee this leſſon. It cannot hurt thee, if thou doſt not quarrel with it: but if thy will be reſigned to his, herein thou wilt have fellowſhip with him; and thou wilt have reaſon conſtantly to be praying to him---Not my will, Lord, but thine be done.

Conſider, for the improvement of this fellowſhip, that thy Lord himſelf was exerciſed with the croſs. He has gone before thee bearing it. He has taken the curſe and wrath out of it, and has ſanctified it to all his followers. In faith they muſt take it up, and in patience carry it, or they will not come to the kingdom. Certainly then their crucified Lord will be with them: yea, he has promiſed---"I will be with thee in "trouble"---ſeek his preſence, O my ſoul, under the croſs---wait for communion with him---he has ſaid he will be with thee: expect therefore the light of his countenance, which is better than life. Do not fear the croſs, ſince it is to bring thee ſuch a bleſſing: it is to be the means of thy fellowſhip with Jeſus in his ſenſible

ſupport, and heavenly comfort; take it up then. Suppoſe it removes all thine earthly joy. Let it go. The pain of its loſs is not to be compared with the joy of thy ſpirit. Jeſus will give thee pure holy joy, and by his divine art will extract it out of pain. He afflicts, that he may comfort. He takes away ſenſual, that he may give ſpiritual pleaſure. He removes creature-love, that he may communicate more of this happy love. In mercy he chaſtiſes. He ſees there is need to mortify ſin. He ſends the croſs for this purpoſe, and bleſſes what he ſends. It works like wholeſome phyſic. But oh! it is bitter, it is nauſeous to the taſte. Why do you chaw it then? Swallow the pill. The benefit is not to be found in the mouth, but in the ſtomach. There it will purge bad humors. The ſovereign phyſician intends it ſhould operate upon every evil temper, which would hinder your bleſſed communion with him, and ſhould be the means of exerciſing thoſe graces, by which that communion is maintained and may be improved.

Such is the croſs of Chriſt—taken up in faith, and carried in patience, it promotes daily fellowſhip with him; which is the greateſt bleſſing upon earth. There is no greater in heaven: only they enjoy it by ſenſe, and we by faith. But we have the ſame fellowſhip with them in Jeſus, and the ſame communion with them in the graces of his ſalvation. And for theſe he

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makes way by his croſs. He deadens the ſoul to the life of ſenſe, that it may feel more of happineſs in him. When he has withdrawn other joys, he often ſhines into the heart with joy unſpeakable. He generally vouchſafes theſe his love tokens to his ſuffering brethren, and gives his richeſt cordials in their deepeſt diſtreſs. Each of ſuch happy ſouls can ſay---It is good for me to ſuffer with Jeſus. Yes, Lord: I am thy witneſs: thy croſs is good: it has been the means of my greateſt good: for thou haſt brought me by it to forſake communion with other objects, and to enjoy communion with thee in thy precious love. If thou haſt been pleaſed to take away any of my beloved objects, thou haſt in much mercy ſupplied their place with thy preſence. I have found my loſſes my chief gain. O my Jeſus, Lord God almighty, I bleſs thee and adore thee for the diſtinguiſhing grace vouchſafed to me under the croſs. It was entirely from thee, and the effect of thy love, that I had any patience, or any fellowſhip with thee in the way of ſuffering. It was thy doing, and I glorify thee for enabling me to maintain peace with the Father through faith in thine obedience unto death, and for ſatisfying me that my croſſes were appointed and ſent by covenant love. Thou art the giver of theſe bleſſings, and on thee I wait for the continuance of them. Whatever thou calleſt upon me to ſuffer, order it and me,

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as ſeemeth beſt to thy godly wiſdom; but leave me not to myſelf. Be always with me, my good Lord, that I may bear thy croſs, and carry it patiently and profitably, thou ſuſtaining both me and it every ſtep of my way to heaven. Hear me, my Jeſus, and anſwer: for without thee I can do nothing; but ſtrengthened by thee I ſhall be able to bear all things, and my daily croſs will keep me in daily communion with thee to my profit and to thine eternal praiſe. *Amen.*

Thus the croſs of Chriſt is ſanctified, and keeps up communion with him in the bleſſings of his ſalvation. So it does with the Father in his love. In the covenant his name is expreſſive of his office. He is a Father, who has every holy affection and feeling of love. He embraces in the bowels of the tendereſt parent all his family---Chriſt the head, and all the members of his body, the church. With one undivided love his heart is ſet upon Chriſt and them, and with the ſame bountiful hand he bleſſes him and them. What Chriſt is, they ſhall be. In this moſt gracious relation he ſtands to the whole houſhold of faith. He is their Father, who loves and accepts them, pardons, juſtifies, ſanctifies, and bleſſes them with all ſpiritual and eternal bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus.

It is hard to believe this under the croſs. To cleave to him in love, as our Father, when his hand is lifted up to ſmite, yea when we ſmart under his rod, then to ſee love in his heart and

love guiding his hand, is faith very triumphant. We are apt to look upon our ſufferings as coming from the wrath of God. We think he muſt be diſpleaſed, or elſe he would not delight to put us to pain: upon this account we are not reconciled to the croſs, but would ſhake it off, if we could. The ſcripture gives us a different view of this matter, and repreſents God in a more amiable light, even in the ſevereſt chaſtiſement of his children. He is their Father, and they are his ſons. This relation cannot ſubſiſt without his chaſtening them. He informs them of the neceſſity of it; he declares to them his purpoſe and grace before the chaſtening, and he aſſigns the motives and ends of his proceeding. He has always the ſame Father's love, and is always dealing with them as with ſons. His croſs is one of the chief marks of it. He ſends it with a meſſage of love, and it comes to them big with mercies. When the Father intends an abundant communication of his love, he generally makes way for it by ſome heavy croſs, and when he would continue, or increaſe his favors, he keeps the croſs upon them. It is his appointed means of promoting fellowſhip with him in the graces and bleſſings of his fatherly love. And it anſwers this end, when it is received by faith, and carried by patience: for then the believer, reſting on the ſure foundation laid for him in the holy life and death

death of Immanuel, ſees the Father reconciled, and expects every promiſed bleſſing from his love. Whatever croſs comes, he receives it from his Father in Jeſus. He holds faſt this truth---God is my God---he loves me perfectly in his Son, and therefore I ſhall find ſome proof of his fatherly love in this affliction. But if his faith be weak, if he forget, or forſake for a time his foundation, then the croſs will become intolerable. Murmuring will ariſe. The fleſh will hearken to unbelief. Fretfulneſs will take place, and thus God will be robbed of his glory, and the believer of his comfort. It has pleaſed God therefore, in order to ſtrengthen his children's faith againſt theſe attacks, to give them many plain declarations of his invariable intention to do them good in all their afflictions. The Son is a witneſs for him: he was in the boſom of the Father, and knew all the purpoſes of his heart. He has given us a moſt delightful account of the Father's deſign in afflicting his children—"I am, "ſays he to his diſciples, the true vine, and my "Father is the huſbandman: every branch that "beareth not fruit in me, he taketh away, and "every branch that beareth fruit, HE PURGETH "IT, THAT IT MAY BRING FORTH MORE "FRUIT." The Father looks upon all his chil- "dren, as one with Chriſt; as much united to him, and in him, as the branches are in the vine, therefore as a wiſe huſbandman he takes the ſpecial

cial charge and care of them. Every branch that does not bear fruit in Chriſt---it is not as we read it, every branch in me, but every branch that does not bear fruit IN ME---whatever it may ſeem to be---in profeſſion, a branch---in ſhew, a fruitful branch, yet it has no life; it was never cut off from the old dead ſtock, nor grafted into me the life-giving vine. The huſbandman knows this well. Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, ſhall be rooted up. He does this in an hour of trial. Then it appears, that ſuch branches were only in appearance united to the vine: for if he had made them part of it, he would no doubt have continued them in it, but he took them away that they might be manifeſt, that they were not one with the vine. This is a great part of the vine-dreſſer's buſineſs ---he ſuffers no rotten branches upon his vine. He goes over his charge and attends to every branch. If any ſeem to men, or to themſelves to be in the vine: for hypocrites are great ſelf-deceivers, and the ſelf-righteous love to be deceived, and proud nature is fond of growing into Chriſt by ſomething of its own, the vine-dreſſer in due time diſcovers their miſtake, and manifeſts to the world that they were not branches of his grafting: for he *taketh them away:* but every branch, ſays Chriſt, that beareth fruit by its communion with me, he *purgeth*; by his divine huſbandry he removes every thing, which would

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ſtop its growth and hinder its fruitfulneſs. The branches of the vine are ſo weak that they always want a prop--he ſupports them. They often run very luxuriant--he cuts them with his pruning knife. They have many bad humors and juices in them--thoſe he corrects. He purges every noxious quality, and whatever is contrary to the holy nature of the heavenly vine he ſubdues. Moſt merciful is his purpoſe herein. He would have the branches of his own grafting to be lively and flouriſhing--like the ſtock upon which they grow. I am the vine, ſays Chriſt, ye are the branches. God's huſbandry is to make the branches like the vine; therefore he purgeth them, in order *that they may bring forth much fruit*. And is this his deſign? Does he afflict them entirely for their good? Does he ſend every trial and trouble to purge their corruptions and to quicken their graces? Has the Lord Jeſus given us ſuch a pleaſing view of his Father's love, aſſuring us that all croſſes are ſent by him to make us more lively and more fruitful? Since this is the caſe, what great reaſon haſt thou, O my ſoul, to expect theſe bleſſings from the croſs? Here is a promiſe for thy faith to reſt on. A promiſe, which diſcovers the heart of thy Father, and his abundant love in afflicting thee. He would have thee not only to believe in his love, but alſo to enjoy it. He afflicts thee; but it is in order to thy keeping up communion with him under the croſs,

croſs, and he knows it is the beſt means of keeping it up and of promoting it. O ſeek then by faith for the promiſed fruit. Expect in patience the rich harveſt. And that thou mayeſt quietly ſubmit to the Father's will in purging thee, as a branch, obſerve how exactly the apoſtle Paul agrees with his bleſſed Maſter---" Furthermore " we have had fathers of our fleſh, who correct- " ed us, and we gave them reverence, ſhall we " not much rather be in ſubjection unto the " Father of ſpirits, and live? For they verily " for a few days corrected us, after their own " pleaſure; but he for our profit, that we might " be PARTAKERS OF HIS HOLINESS." There is a reverence due to earthly parents, and children are required to ſubmit to their correction; although herein they often conſult their own will and pleaſure more than their children's profit. And is not greater reverence due to the Father of our ſpirits, and ſhall not we ſubmit to his corrections? Eſpecially ſince his deſign in them is to promote the greateſt dignity and higheſt happineſs of his children, even to make them partakers of his holineſs: For to *partake* is not only to give them a title to, but alſo to give them poſſeſſion of, to communicate, to have fellowſhip with him, to ſhare with him, in his *holineſs*. Holineſs is the Father's image in his children, by which he makes them like him, and capable of enjoying him. He choſe them in Chriſt before the

the foundation of the world, that they ſhould be holy. He choſe them in Chriſt, and made Chriſt their ſanctification. In him they partake, as branches in the vine, of his holy nature. They are one with him in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. He is the divine root, from which all the branches by the influence of the holy Spirit derive their nouriſhment and growth. From him is their fruit found. And the heavenly huſbandman purpoſing to make the branches very fruitful, has provided effectual means. Among which the chief is his fatherly correction. This he ſends to all his children, and in the tendereſt love. He would have them to bring forth much fruit, that herein he may be glorified---holy fruit, produced by his care and culture, and ripened by daily communications of his grace. Therefore he appoints many heavy trials and croſſes, by which he deſigns to bring them not only to believe in his love, but alſo to a growing enjoyment of it. He would communicate to them an increaſe of its bleſſings. He would have them nearer to himſelf and more like to himſelf—Holy *as* he is holy—not in degree, but in likeneſs. He would teach them more ſubmiſſion to his will, for which he wiſely and mercifully ſuits the croſs. He would improve their love to him, which he does by manifeſting his to them: therefore he ſends his croſs to deaden their hearts to other love, that he may give them a happier ſenſe of his.

his. And his children have found ſuffering times bleſſed times. They never had ſuch nearneſs to their Father, ſuch holy freedom with him, and ſuch heavenly refreſhments from him, as under the croſs. It only took away what ſtopt the increaſe of this happineſs, which thereby was made more ſpiritual and exalted. The croſs thus ſanctified is the greateſt bleſſing on this ſide of heaven. Becauſe by it the Father keeps his children in the cloſeſt communion, that they have with him upon earth; by it he purges them, makes them fruitful, and partakers of his holineſs; by it he crucifies the life of ſenſe, deadens them to the world, mortifies their luſts and paſſions, and by it as the outward man periſheth the inward man is renewed day by day. Moſt bleſſed renewal! Daily the Father communicates, and by means of the croſs, new life, new ſtrength, and new comfort to the inward man. By the right ſpirit renewed within him he learns the neceſſity of the daily croſs---he ſees the merciful appointment of it to teach reſignation to the Father's holy will, to work a conformity to the firſt-born among many brethren both in ſuffering and by ſuffering, to bring in ſenſible experience of the Father's ſupport and comfort. What bleſſings are theſe? how great! how precious! To be branches in the vine, and to have the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt the huſbandman, who grafts them into him---O what an in-

finite mercy is this! and to be under his ſpecial care, faithfully watched over in order to remove every thing hurtful, and to beſtow every thing uſeful, this love paſſeth underſtanding: And to have this love to feaſt upon in the abſence of other comforts, to have them taken away only to make room for this, to enjoy this moſt plentifully, even under troubles and afflictions, and to be only purged by them in order to bring forth much fruit; theſe are triumphs of divine love. O my God and Father, I confeſs and deplore my frequent miſtaking thy dealings with me. I did not ſee they were all in love. Through mine ignorance and ſelf-will I thought thy croſs was a puniſhment, and I uſed wickedly to deſpiſe the chaſtening of the Lord. Pardon thy ſervant concerning this thing. Forgive mine oppoſition to thy croſs, and ſubdue mine impatient deſire to ſhake it off. Holy Father, mortify my will, and make it bow to thine. Thy will be done in me, and by me. Purge me, and make me fruitful under the croſs. Chaſten me, that I may be a partaker of thy holineſs. I bleſs thee, O my God, for the deſire which I have to keep up communion with thee in my ſufferings: I believe thou art my perfectly reconciled Father in Jeſus, and therefore truſting to thy love in him, I would take up thy croſs and expect under it thy covenant bleſſings. Yes, Lord. This is of grace. Thine be the praiſe for ſhewing me the need of ſuffering,

ſuffering, and of renewing me by it in the inward man to a conformity to thy holy will. I now ſee thy love herein. It is as much love to crucify the outward man as to renew the inward man. I believe it in my judgment; O bleſſed God, let me experience it in my heart and walk. Order all my croſſes, that they may work together under thee for thy glory and for my good: And if afflictions abound, let conſolations abound, alſo. I have thy promiſe, and I rely upon it. Let it be fulfilled unto thy ſervant for thy dear Son's ſake. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

This bleſſed communion with the Father and the Son, which the ſanctified uſe of the croſs is made the means of promoting, is maintained by the holy Spirit: He is a perſon in the Godhead coequal and co-eternal with the Father and with the Son. It is his office to apply and to make effectual all covenant bleſſings. Faith in the Son, and thro' him love to the Father, are from his influence. He is the Lord and giver of all ſpiritual life, and of every ſpiritual enjoyment: For ſo the apoſtle teaches in his prayer for the Corinthians---The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the holy Ghoſt be with you all. This communion of the Holy Ghoſt conſiſted in partaking by his means with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in his grace, and with the Father in his love. The holy Ghoſt made the application. He quickened the ſoul, and inſpired the breath of life into it,

it, and on him it depends for every ſpiritual act, as much as the life of the body does on its breathing. Whoever ſtedfaſtly believes in Jeſus under the croſs, and experiences under it the Father's love, has this fellowſhip with the Father and the Son by the operation of the holy Spirit: Therefore that ſweet grace, which bears up with faith in Jeſus, and with patience under the Father's rod, is ſaid to be from him---"The fruit of the Spirit is *long-ſuffering*"---He enables the ſoul to wait quietly. And if the time be long and the ſuffering hard, he gives long patience. He does not take away the ſenſe of pain, but he beſtows ſtrength to bear it, and by it he produces a plentiful harveſt of graces and bleſſings. Thus he teaches us himſelf---"Now "no chaſtening for the preſent ſeemeth to be "joyous, but grievous: nevertheleſs afterward "it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteouſ-"neſs, unto them who are exerciſed thereby" ---Theſe are the fruits of the Spirit: They are all of his producing. And they are fruits of righteouſneſs, which none can produce but thoſe, who are one with Chriſt; and in him righteous before God. Although ſenſe cannot perceive, how they ſhould grow or ripen upon the croſs of Chriſt, yet faith can. The promiſe is ſure. And waiting faith, exerciſed with ſuffering, finds many promiſed fruits. O my ſoul, conſider this precious ſcripture, and with cloſe attention,

attention. Study it. Treaſure it up in thy heart. It contains a rich cordial for the afflicted. Obſerve there is love in ſending the croſs, love to be manifeſted by it, and heavenly fruits of love to grow upon it. Why then is ſuffering ſo hard? Why art thou ſo little profited by it? Is it not generally barren, becauſe thou art not looking to the word of promiſe, and depending upon the holy Spirit to give thee the promiſed fruit? Aſk thyſelf therefore, eſpecially in the hour of ſuffering---Am I now expecting the communion of the Holy Ghoſt, that by his grace I may partake with the Son in his ſalvation, and with the Father in his love? Is this my preſent experience? There is no bearing the croſs without it. Art thou then, O my ſoul, truſting to him for this happy fellowſhip, and hoping that as thou art a branch in the vine, and the huſbandman is now purging thee, thou mayeſt bring forth much fruit? And obſerve, what kind of fruit it is. All the effects of being in union with Chriſt, and of having communion with him are called *fruits of righteouſneſs*. Chriſt is the vine. The branch muſt be one with him before it can live and grow---one with him in his life and death---a partaker of his divine righteouſneſs---and then the branch abiding in him by the influence of the Holy Spirit will be made fruitful in love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance: For the fruit of the

Spirit is in all goodneſs, and righteouſneſs, and truth. He brings forth all the fruit, that is to the glory of God---And it is all *peaceable* fruit: for it is produced by him in conſequence of covenant-love, by which the Father is revealed as the God of peace, and the Son as the great peace-maker, and when the holy Spirit enables the poor ſinner to believe this, then he gives him joy and peace in believing---being juſtified by faith he has peace with God through Jeſus Chriſt. The croſs ſoon comes after this---not to deſtroy, but to try this faith---not to take away, but to confirm this peace---it is ſent to give proof of the foundneſs of faith, and to manifeſt the ſweetneſs of divine love: for it comes from the God of peace, and all the fruits which he intends to produce by it are *peaceable*, ſuch as ſhould increaſe the happy ſenſe of peace in the minds of his children. And for this purpoſe the holy Spirit abides with them. He has revealed the Father's love in ſcripture, and he is a faithful witneſs of it to their hearts. He ſheds it abroad and ſatisfies them of it. Yea he gives them ſenſible experience and enjoyment of it under the croſs. This produces a quiet ſubmiſſion to his will, and an humble dependence upon his power: Which are manifeſted by waiting upon God in all ways and means for the grace promiſed to his afflicted children. The croſs requires great grace, and therefore calls forth much prayer.

prayer. Suffering times are praying times. The croſs brings ſinners upon their knees---Manaſſeh in affliction entreated the Lord--So did Paul --Behold, he prayeth. It keeps believers upon their knees, as the prophet witneſſes---" Lord, " in trouble have they viſited thee, they poured " out a prayer when thy chaſtening was upon " them." The Lord himſelf declares the ſame ---" I will go and return to my place, till they " acknowledge their offence, and ſeek my face; " in their affliction they will ſeek me early." Accordingly they did ſeek him---" Come, ſay " they, and let us return unto the Lord: for " he hath torn and he will heal us, he hath " ſmitten, and he will bind us up." O bleſſed fruit of affliction! when ſanctified by the Spirit it teaches the children of God to pray fervently, and to continue inſtant in prayer: It diſcovers the weakneſs of the fleſh, and the rebellion of the will, and ſhews the neceſſity of drawing near to God for ſtrength and patience. It keeps the mind in a praying frame, expecting by the grace of the Spirit communion with the Father and the Son. The croſs makes this communion neceſſary. It cannot be endured without a belief of the Father's love in Jeſus, and therefore the Spirit of prayer keeps this belief in exerciſe, and enables the ſoul to plead the promiſe of ſtrength to endure patiently, and to bring forth much fruit. The promiſe cannot fail. They who truſt

in it cannot be diſappointed; but ſhall find grace to help in time of need. As prayer is thus neceſſary, ſo the holy Spirit generally makes it ſweet under the croſs. Is any afflicted among you? Let him pray. Prayer is the appointed means of his comfort. If affliction ſend him to God, God will meet him, and make him joyful in his houſe of prayer. How encouraging are theſe words?---"Draw nigh to God, and he "will draw nigh to you." In every caſe of diſtreſs, draw nigh in faith to God: He is a very preſent help. Seek his face, and you will find him near unto you: For the Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, nigh to hear, to anſwer, and to comfort. Thus his promiſe runs---"Then "ſhalt thou call, and the Lord ſhall anſwer, "thou ſhalt cry, and he ſhall ſay, Here I am" --What is your burden? I am preſent to give ſtrength to bear it. What is your grief? Here are my comforts---Do your tribulations abound? Here are my conſolations abounding alſo. Here I am---Aſk what you will believing, and it ſhall be done unto you. O what times of refreſhing are theſe? The holy Ghoſt ſenſibly comforts the afflicted. When they draw nigh to God, he is preſent to make their hearts joyful. He diſpels their darkneſs with the light of his countenance, and turns their mourning into joy. And thus they have not only communion with God in prayer, but alſo ſuch communications of his heavenly

heavenly love, that they can often ſay, It is good for us that we have been in trouble.

In times of trouble the WORD alſo is generally ſweet. All people in diſtreſs look out for ſome comfort: And the holy Spirit directs believers to the ſcriptures. "Whatſoever things were "written aforetime, were written for our learn-"ing, that we through patience and comfort "of the ſcriptures might have hope." The af-"flicted feel their want of patience and comfort, "which puts them upon careful hearing and reading of the good word of God. They want to know what it ſays of their caſe, and when they meet a ſuitable promiſe, then they have a ground of hope. Their preſent trials require them to ſeek for ſomething more than the truth of the promiſe. This being credited, they therefore expect the promiſed bleſſing. When the famine was in Canaan, Jacob and his family could not have been kept alive by believing there was corn in Egypt: They muſt either fetch it or die. Trouble calls for the experience of the promiſed bleſſings, and when they are received at ſuch a time they are ſweet indeed. They feel, as eaſe does after pain. When the holy Spirit applies the comfort, the promiſe, by which he applies it, is precious. It is like a reviving cordial to a fainting heart. O how ſweet are thy words unto my taſte, yea ſweeter than honey unto my mouth. Honey is ſweet: But

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the word is ſweeter. When through patience and comfort of the ſcriptures the afflicted believer enjoys the good of the promiſe, then he can ſay---Now I know, O Lord, that thy judgements are right, and that thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me: Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindneſs be for my comfort according to thy word unto thy ſervant.

Sweet is the comfort which the afflicted receive from God the Comforter under the croſs: not only *in* ſuffering, but alſo *after* it. AFTERWARD alſo "it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of "righteouſneſs." He, who carries the croſs of Chriſt does not labor in vain, and ſpend his ſtrength for nought: but he is bearing forth good ſeed. If he ſow it in tears, yet he ſhall reap in joy. The Lord looks at the fruit, and intends to bring forth much of it by the croſs: We are apt to look at the ſuffering, and to forget the fruit. He has the end in view in the uſe of all means; and the holy Spirit has revealed this clearly, that we might depend upon him for receiving the proper fruit of affliction. The Lord ſays, he led his people through the great and terrible wilderneſs, wherein were fiery flying ſerpents and ſcorpions, and drought; that he might humble them, and that he might prove them, to do them good AT THE LATTER END. He intended to do them good. This was firſt in his heart. Then the way in which he would

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do it: he would lead them through many afflictions: by which they ſhould find *at the latter end*, how good God was to them. The promiſe of this was their encouragement to bear the croſs, till they reaped the fruit. In like manner the Lord ſays to the afflicted Jews—" I know the " thoughts that I think towards you, ſaith the " Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to " give you AN EXPECTED END"---ſuch an end as you would wiſh, and having my promiſe, ſuch as you may ſafely hope for---my thoughts indeed are not as your thoughts---you think I have caſt you off, and that your preſent croſs is to cruſh you---no, I mean to do you good by it---and ſo the end will prove---wait a little in faith, and all will come to an happy iſſue.

Are theſe ſcriptures the truth of God? Has the eternal Spirit promiſed in them, that although the bearing of the croſs be very painful, yet it is very profitable? Will he afterwards cauſe them to bring forth much fruit, who have been exerciſed with it? Art thou then waiting, O my ſoul, under all thy troubles for the promiſed end? Doſt thou expect it, and in patience tarry the Lord's leiſure. Canſt thou look back, and ſee how merciful the dealings of thy God have been---how gracious his rod----how loving his correction? Canſt thou look forward under every croſs, perſuaded, that God will do thee good at the latter end? That he will cauſe many peaceable

able fruits to grow upon this ſeemingly barren tree? Yea, that theſe light afflictions, which are but for a moment, ſhall work for thee an eternal weight of glory, far more excellent than can be conceived? O God the holy Ghoſt, I do believe it: I would not doubt of the truth of the promiſe in thy word, nor of the truth of thy grace in my heart: I therefore beſeech thee, O thou Spirit Jehovah, to enable me to keep up communion with thee in all my trials, that I may bring forth thoſe peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs. Thou art the giver of every grace. I acknowledge thee to be the author of my ſpiritual life: I was dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and thou haſt quickened me. It is of thy mere gift that I have any faith, and that upon the trial it was found to be true faith: I bleſs thee for this grace, and humbly pray for the continuance and for the increaſe of it. Meet me in the uſe of all means, and enable me to grow in faith, rooted and grounded in Chriſt Jeſus, that I may alſo grow in love to his Father and to my Father. O thou divine revealer of his heavenly love, ſhed it abroad more abundantly in my heart, that I may learn more reſignation to his will, more ſubjection to his authority, and more ſubmiſſion to his rod. I acknowledge thee, O holy making Spirit to be the teacher of patience, and what I have learnt was thy revelation. It was in thy ſtrength that I was enabled to go on with any quietneſs bearing

ing my croſs. Thy grace made me willing, and nothing elſe can keep me willing, to have the fleſh crucified with its affections and luſts. O God put forth thine almighty power, and enable me to part with every thing, which would hinder my fellowſhip with the Father and the Son. I deſire ſo to walk this day, as to have growing fellowſhip with the eternal Three, and I deſire it through thine influence. O God the Holy Ghoſt, carry on thy work. Exalt and purify my faith and patience, and every grace: if it be thy will to do this under the croſs, O make me willing and able to bear it. Let every croſs bring forth richer and riper fruit, until thou give me an exceeding great and eternal harveſt of glory. I aſk this in the name of Jeſus, and I expect an anſwer of grace through the Father's love in him, to whom with thee, O bleſſed Spirit, three perſons in one Godhead be equal glory, worſhip, and praiſe, now, and for ever. *Amen.*

Meditate, O my ſoul, with ſeriouſneſs upon this great ſubject. Study the ſcripture account of the croſs. The knowledge of it enters into the very eſſence of the peace and comfort of thy walk. Thou canſt not run away from the croſs: thou canſt not caſt it off: remember, if thou wilt be Chriſt's diſciple, thou muſt take it up daily and follow him. If it be very heavy and very grievous, yet it will not hinder thee from

from following him. He carried the heavieſt part for thee---he endured the curſe and puniſhment due to thy ſins---he left no wrath for thee to ſuffer---Bleſſed be his love, the croſs has no curſe in it now---thy ſufferings are all ſent from love---and his love will help thee to bear them and to profit by them: for he has promiſed to bleſs and ſanctify them to his people. And he makes them a bleſſing indeed. Never on this ſide of heaven does he give them ſuch near and happy communion with himſelf as under the croſs. O read then, and ſtudy what is revealed in ſcripture concerning it. Go over it again and again. Learn well, and inwardly digeſt the doctrine of the croſs of Chriſt---the neceſſity---the benefit---the bleſſings of it. Meditate and feed upon the ſweet promiſes relating to it: mix faith with them, that they may nouriſh and ſtrengthen thee in time of need. But never forget, that thy croſs, be it what it will, is appointed for thee in covenant love. It is the portion allotted thee by thy heavenly Father---decreed in weight and meaſure, to an atom---thou ſhalt not bear it one moment longer, than he has determined---and many precious fruits it ſhall produce. Thou wilt find ſuffering times growing times---growth in faith and patience, in mortification to ſin, and in fellowſhip with the ever bleſſed Trinity. The author of thy faith puts it to the trial: it comes out of the lion's

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den unhurt: it comes out of the fiery furnace refined. God is glorified hereby, and thou art ſtrengthened. He ſends the croſs to teach thee patience, and he continues it for the exerciſe and for the improvement of the ſame grace. He intends by his chaſtening to crucify the fleſh, and to mortify thy members which are upon the earth. In love he takes away ſenſual, that he may give thee ſpiritual joys. He does not hate thee, but love guides every ſtroke of his chaſtening. He is only weakening thine attachment to earthly things, that he may increaſe thy communion with Father, Son, and Spirit. O what bleſſings are theſe! Meditate, O my ſoul, much and often upon them. Pray for the experience of them in time of need: and be aſſured with all theſe helps, the croſs will be exerciſe hard enough for thy patience. Thou canſt carry it only in the ſtrength of almighty grace. May the Lord ſtrengthen thee from day to day to run the race ſet before thee, till thou win the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The believer exercised with the inward cross learns to walk more humbly with his God.

THE outward cross is not always a burden alike heavy. God gives his children a little respite. After they have been long tried he sometimes removes their trouble, and gives them ease and outward prosperity. Their sun arises as it does in nature. After many cold and dark days a fine season comes---finer for coming after them. The sky grows clear and serene, the air is soft and refreshing, the sun shines with warm and enlivening rays. Every thing looks pleasant, and smiles around you. So it is in the kingdom of grace. The believer may not be always in heaviness through manifold afflictions. He has his times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. He prospers and is in health. The blessing of God is upon his substance. Every thing that he takes in hand succeeds. He is happy in his circumstances, and happy in his family. He sees the goodness of God in these mercies, and he is thankful. But if the heavenly Father sometimes indulge his children with the removal of the outward cross, yet he never does with the inward. They carry it all their days, and

and an heavy burden it is. So long as they are in the body, while they are in this tabernacle, they do groan being burdened: for

The INWARD CROSS is the fault and corruption of ſinful nature, which doth remain in the regenerate, and is their continual grief and plague: becauſe it is always oppoſing their holy and happy walk with God. It is called in ſcripture

THE FLESH, the whole man being carnal, and full of luſting againſt the Spirit.

THE OLD MAN, being the firſt in us, before the new man is created by the Spirit of regeneration.

A BODY OF SIN, made up completely of members and appetites, in which there is not only an abſence of all good, but alſo a propenſity to all evil, inſomuch that nothing can move or ſtir in this body, but what is ſinful.

THE LAW OF SIN, becauſe ſin rules and governs the natural man.

INDWELLING SIN, becauſe it dwells in the whole man, both in ſoul and body.

CONCUPISCENCE, OR LUST, which the apoſtle ſays, he ſhould not have known to be ſin, unleſs the law had ſaid---Thou ſhalt not covet or luſt.

This fallen nature is alſo ſaid to be corrupt according to the deceitful luſts, to be contrary to the Spirit, to rebel againſt the law of God, and not to be ſubject to it, neither indeed can be. "This

"corruption

" corruption of nature doth remain, according " to our reformers, Art. 9. Yea in them that " are regenerated, whereby the luſt of the fleſh, " called in Greek, *fronecma ſarkos*, which ſome " do expound the wiſdom, ſome ſenſuality, ſome " the affection, ſome the deſire of the fleſh, is " not ſubject to the law of God: and although " there is no condemnation for them, that be- " lieve and are baptiſed, yet the apoſtle doth " confeſs that concupiſcence and luſt hath of it- " ſelf the nature of ſin. And in the 15th Art. " *of Chriſt alone without ſin*, they ſay, that all " we the reſt, although baptiſed and born again " in Chriſt, yet offend in many things, and if we " ſay, we have no ſin, we deceive ourſelves and " the truth is not in us."

The compilers of our articles were holy men, and taught of God. They ſpake his mind and will according to the oracles of truth. And it will be a great comfort to a poor ſoldier, wearied with fighting againſt thoſe luſts, which war againſt the ſoul, to find that the beſt Chriſtians in every age have been engaged in the ſame holy war. This will mightily encourage him to take to him the whole armor of God, that he may be able to withſtand in the evil day, and having done all to ſtand.

Attend then, O my ſoul, to the law and to the teſtimony. Pray for the ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation. Deſire grace to ſubmit to the truth of God,

God, that whatever he teaches plainly and expreſly in his word, thou mayeſt believe it, and abide by it. Read and pray, till thou art ſatisfied, and the conviction of thy mind influence thy heart and walk. Art thou to carry the inward croſs all the way to heaven? Is there no diſcharge in this war?---No truce to be made, not even a ceſſation of arms? But art thou to be fighting on the good fight of faith, till the captain of thy ſalvation take thee out of the field of battle? O hard ſervice! To be night and day---at home and abroad---in the cloſet and in the church---at hearing the word and meditating upon it---faſting and praying---at the ſhop and at the exchange—every where and at all times forced to be in arms againſt the aſſaults of indwelling ſin; this is a warfare terrible indeed to fleſh and blood. The length of it—never ended ſo long as breath is in the body. The painfulneſs of it---conſiſting in being at war with a man's ſelf; and in reſiſting his boſom ſins and ſtrongeſt appetites---What diſcouragements are theſe, from entering into, and from continuing in this battle? Why ſhould it be wondered then, that ſome perſons, who only follow the camp, and are not of it, ſhould repent, when they ſee this war and return to Egypt? Or that others, pretending to be on Chriſt's ſide, but never one with him, ſhould dream of ſhaking off this croſs, and of ſitting down here in a land of perfect peace? This is

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the coward's paradiſe. They want to reſt quiet on this ſide of Jordan, and would not go over with Jeſus to fight for the promiſed land. O dear Saviour, keep thy noble army from this deluſion of Satan: So long as they are in the body of ſin and death, make them good ſoldiers of Chriſt Jeſus, reſiſting unto blood ſtriving againſt ſin. For ſo long muſt we be in this hot battle. It is decreed by the ſovereign will of God--and he is always of one mind. He has revealed it in his word of truth, that the corruption of nature doth remain in his regenerate children, they have an old man and a new, they have fleſh and ſpirit, they have nature and grace, and he has deſcribed the combat, which is to laſt through life between theſe two. The beloved apoſtle bears a clear teſtimony. He is ſpeaking of thoſe whom the blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin, and who had fellowſhip with the Father and with the Son, and who proved the truth of this by their walking in the light: He puts himſelf among them: and declares--"If we ſay, that "we have no ſin *now*, we deceive ourſelves and "the truth is not in us"--If WE ſay--He ſaith not, If *thou* ſay, as if he ſpake of ſome particular perſon--Nor if *ye* ſay, as if he intended ordinary Chriſtians alone--But if WE apoſtles, or whatever we be ſay ſo, if any of us, If I, for inſtance, ſhould think I had no ſin now, who am a ſaint of an hundred years old: Becauſe I was a

great favorite of the Lord Chriſt, and have been a great ſufferer for him: Or becauſe I have lived blameleſs before men, and have been a witneſs for the truth in my writings, and am ready to ſeal it with my blood: If upon account of any thing done by me, or in me, of any real excellency or attainment, I ſhould fancy myſelf in a ſtate of ſinleſs perfection, the holy Ghoſt charges me with ſelf-deceit. A dreadful deluſion! ariſing from the pride of my heart, and its rebellion againſt God, and diſcovering the moſt groſs ignorance of God's righteouſneſs in the holy law, and of Chriſt's righteouſneſs in the glorious goſpel: But if I was to ſay, as well as to think it; if I ſhould tell any body--Now I have no ſin--I am perfect--Now, at this time, I have received perfect purity of heart: For ever ſince I received it, I have had nothing ſtirring in me for one year, for two, twenty, forty years, but love, pure love to God--God is in all my thoughts, and nothing but God--I do his will in earth, as it is done in heaven: If I ſhould ſay ſo, I ſhould tell a great lie: For I ſhould deceive myſelf, and the truth would not be in me.

Are theſe indeed the very words of the apoſtle? "If we ſay, that we have no ſin now, we de-" ceive ourſelves, and the truth is not in us." Can no other ſenſe be fairly put upon them, but that the holy John had ſin in him at every given moment of his life? Is this the plain literal

meaning of the paſſage? As it certainly is, obſerve then, O my ſoul, the deciſive evidence given here by the Holy Ghoſt concerning the inward croſs. Pray for his teaching that thou mayeſt underſtand, and pray for his grace that thou mayeſt profit from, this ſcripture. Here is his infallible record concerning St. John and all highly favoured believers---He aſſerts, that there was no time of their lives, in which they were free from indwelling ſin: God forbid then, that I ſhould think I had no ſin. He avers, that if they ſhould ſay they had none, they were deceived, and that if they ſhould ſtand to it, as popiſh myſtics, and proteſtant perfectioniſts do, the ſearcher of hearts declares that they lie, and do not the truth--the truth is not in them: For the father of lies has flattered them and drawn them into ſelf-idolatry, with a wicked deſign to corrupt their minds from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt. Beware, O my ſoul, of this deceit: The holy Ghoſt has warned thee of it. He foreſaw how the firſt ſin would break out in after times, and pride would perſuade men that they were perfect in the fleſh, he therefore ſo guarded this ſcripture that none can miſtake it, but ſuch as turn away their ears from the truth. He put all the words in the preſent tenſe, leſt any ſhould think he was ſpeaking of time paſt, or of what men were before the blood of Chriſt had cleanſed them. If we NOW SAY--WE, who now have

fellowſhip

fellowſhip with the bleſſed Trinity, and are walking in the light of their countenance--ſay that WE HAVE NO SIN, nor had none formerly; he is not ſpeaking of that: If he was, the Holy Ghoſt underſtands grammar; and can make no miſtake in expreſſing himſelf, he would certainly have uſed the paſt tenſe, but he uſes the preſent, NOW HAVE NO SIN, ſo as not to want the cleanſing blood of Jeſus this moment as much as ever--If we have any ſuch thoughts WE NOW DECEIVE OURSELVES AND THE TRUTH IS NOT NOW IN US. How forcible and ſtrong is this teſtimony from the mouth of John? And the ſenſe, as well as the grammar ſhews, that he is ſpeaking of believers, and that there is ſin in them: For throughout the chapter he treats of the very ſame perſons, and deſcribes not what they were before, but what they are ſince they received the grace of God. They were cleanſed from all ſin by the blood of the Lamb, were admitted into communion with the Father and the Son by the Spirit, and they enjoyed this communion, walking in the light, as God is in the light---theſe are the perſons here mentioned---of whom God ſays, they had ſin ſtill in them, indwelling ſin, the fault and corruption of nature ſtill remained in them, and if they fancied it did not, they would be ſadly deceived--they would entirely miſtake the covenant of grace, which was to bring ſinners ſenſible of their wants and miſe-

ries to live out of themſelves upon the fulneſs of the God-man—they would forget their own character, under which alone they can be ſaved, ſalvation being only for ſinners—they would fall into the crime of the devil, by pride exalting themſelves againſt the perſon and work of the incarnate God—and they would quite pervert the law and the goſpel: For in order to maintain their inherent perfection, they are forced to legalize the goſpel, and to make it conſiſt of certain terms and conditions, upon the performance of which ſinners ſhall be ſaved, and then in order to comfort themſelves with their having performed theſe terms and conditions, they are forced to turn rank Antimonians: They leſſen the evil of ſin, they excuſe it in themſelves, and make juſt nothing of it. They call it by ſeveral pretty ſoft names, ſuch as infirmity, frailty, excreſcence, and at laſt they get quite rid of it, by laying it upon the devil, and by terming it an injection of old ſatan. And thus they deceive themſelves into perfection, and inſiſt upon it that they have no ſin, although they have enough in them to damn the whole world. O God, open the eyes of theſe ſelf-deceivers, and bring them into the way of truth.

Such is the clear evidence of the holy Spirit: He aſſerts that the greateſt believers, while in the body, have ſin in them. Doſt thou yield, O my ſoul, to his teſtimony? Art thou fully convinced

vinced of it from the work of his grace, as well as from the word of his truth? Doſt thou feel indwelling ſin? Is it the plague of thy heart, and the burden of thy life? When thou art willing to walk humbly with thy God, is it continually in thy way, raiſing objections, putting difficulties, and ſuggeſting hindrances? Is it like a heavy weight preſſing thee down in thy race, that thou canſt not run ſo long, or ſo faſt, as thou couldſt wiſh? Since this is indeed thy daily croſs, and the bearing of it the hardeſt part of thy warfare, O read with diligence the ſcripture account of it. Take notice of the Lord's champions, how they felt under this burden, from whence they derived ſtrength to bear it, and had comfort under it. Hear the man after God's own heart-crying out---"Mine iniquities are "gone over my head, as a heavy burden, they "are too heavy for me"--David had a heavy load: He was ready to ſink, and he could not caſt it off. He could not go into his cloſet, or to the houſe of God: He could not ſit upon his throne, or go in and out before his family, but this grievous croſs ſo bowed him down greatly, that he went mourning all the day long. The burden of it was intolerable, and would have cruſhed him under it, if he had not learned, how to caſt it on the Lord---"Make haſte, ſays "he, to help me, O Lord God of my ſalvation."

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Here he found relief. The prayer of faith was heard, and God was the ſtrength of his ſalvation.

Under the ſame burden a New Teſtament ſaint went groaning all his days. He had a hard conflict between the fleſh and the ſpirit, and he has left the account of it upon record. Bleſſed be God for the ſeventh chapter of the Romans. We there read of the inward croſs, with which all the children of God are exerciſed. In the very ſame Paul there was delight in the law of God after the inward man, but he found another law in his members, rebelling againſt the law of God---the fleſh, in which dwelleth no good thing, never ceaſed to aſſault the ſpirit with its vile thoughts, legal workings, and rebellious inclinations---when he had a will to do good, he could not do it ſo perfectly, as he deſired---his beſt moments were never free from the inroads of indwelling ſin: therefore in the bitterneſs of his ſoul he cried out--"O wretched man that I "am"--O! that ſigh came from the bottom of his heart--I know what he felt--he groaned being burdened--weary and tired with this continual conflict he looked out for deliverance. "Who ſhall deliver me from the body of this "death?" He ſaw by faith his almighty Saviour, and in him expected everlaſting victory--"I "thank God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord." He reſted upon Chriſt in the battle, and through him

him waited for deliverance, knowing that one day he ſhould be made more than conqueror.

Well then, O my ſoul, here is comfort. If the corruption of nature be thy croſs; ſo it was to David, and ſo it was to Paul. Thy caſe is not ſingular. It is common to every ſoldier who is fighting under the banner of Chriſt. This croſs is unavoidable: becauſe it is in thy boſom. It is thine inmoſt ſelf--thy whole nature which is corrupt according to the deceitful luſts. Thou haſt not an atom of thy body, nor the leaſt motion or ſtirring of any faculty in thy ſoul, but ſin is in it; and therefore it is capable of being a plague to the new man. The Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks thus of the inward warfare--"This I "ſay then; walk in the ſpirit, and ye ſhall not "fulfil the luſts of the fleſh: for the fleſh luſteth "againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the "fleſh, and theſe are contrary the one to the "other, ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye "would." Theſe words are addreſſed to the Galatians, who were believers, and called into the liberty of the goſpel, but by falſe teaching they were under a great temptation. They had begun in the ſpirit, but they thought of being perfected in the fleſh. They ſet out with ſalvation by faith, but expected ſalvation at laſt by works. Among other arguments to convince them of their miſtake here is one unanſwerable, namely, No works of ours can ſave a ſinner but ſuch

ſuch as are perfect, no works of ours are perfect, therefore they cannot ſave a ſinner. And that none of them are perfect is certain, becauſe in every one of them there is ſomething of the fleſh, of corrupt nature as well as ſomething of the ſpirit and of ſpiritual nature. Theſe two are contrary as life and death, and they are always in action, every moment the one luſting againſt the other: ſo that no believer can do the things which he would, ſo perfectly as the holy law requires.

How grievous muſt this inward croſs be to a real believer? For it conſiſts in the oppoſition, which he finds within him, to God and to the things of God. The fleſh ever luſteth againſt the ſpirit, the old man againſt the new. There is a continual war between theſe contrary powers. The fleſh is a complete body of ſin armed with every member and inſtrument of rebellion, that can reſiſt the motions and actions of the new man. There is darkneſs in the underſtanding always clouding the light of the glorious goſpel, and therefore we know but in part. The will of the fleſh always oppoſes the holy will of God. There is enmity in the heart working againſt the love of God and of his will. There is pride to weaken humility--anger to oppoſe meekneſs--the carnal mind to fight againſt ſpiritual-mindedneſs. When the ſpirit is willing the fleſh is weak. When you draw near to God in prayer, the imagination will not be confined: it will

will wander after a thouſand vain objects. When you are hearing the word, it will diſturb your attention with its unaccountable excurſions. It is ſo ſportive and flighty, that you cannot keep it within any bounds. Is it not ſo, O my ſoul? Art thou not ſenſible of this heavy croſs? Doſt thou not find ſomething in thee always reſiſting and weakening the exerciſe of thy graces? and is not this the great plague of thy life? Can there be a greater, than to carry about with thee a ſinful nature, daily trying to hinder thee in thy holy walk and happy communion with God? O how much does it concern thee then to be well ſkilled in bearing this croſs, and in behaving under it as a good ſoldier of Chriſt Jeſus! And to this end the principles before laid down are abſolutely neceſſary. Without them thou canſt not rightly underſtand the nature of indwelling ſin, and canſt not poſſibly gain victory over it. Only the doctrines of grace received into thy heart can enable thee to walk with God under this croſs. Call to mind then what was agreed upon in the covenant of the Trinity, and was fulfilled in the perſon and work of Immanuel for thy peace with the Father, and for thy returning to him in love, and has been applied to thee by the holy Spirit, who has given thee faith in Jeſus, and has manifeſted the love of the Father in him: thou art therefore now one with thy covenant-head--in him complete and perfect, although

although thou art in thyſelf ſtill a ſinner. Thou haſt a body of ſin, through the luſting of which thou art not able to keep the holy law according to its full demands in any one inſtance. But thou art before the Father, what thy ſurety is. He ſees thee in him, without ſpot, or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing--accepted as he is--beloved with the ſame love---looked upon with the ſame joy---and bleſſed with all ſpiritual bleſſings in him. Thy ſurety lived for thee: thou haſt the righteouſneſs of God for thy juſtification. Thy ſurety died for thee: in him thou art as truly dead unto ſin, as Chriſt himſelf is. Thy ſurety roſe again, and took poſſeſſion of ſpiritual and eternal life for thee. He was delivered for thine offences, and raiſed again for thy juſtification. Thou ſhalt reign with him, as certainly as he has now the crown upon his own head. Such is the perfect ſalvation, which is for thee; although thou art ſtill the ſubject of ſin: for thy pardon is without exception or reverſe—All treſpaſſes are freely forgiven. Thy juſtification to life is abſolute: for it is God himſelf that juſtifieth. He choſe thee in Jeſus, that thou ſhouldſt be holy and without blame before him---and ſo thou art. As a member in his body thou art without blemiſh. Here is thy relief under the inward croſs. The Father choſe thee in his Son, looks upon thee in him, and deals with thee according to covenant love: there is therefore now no condemnation to thee,

thee, who art in Chriſt Jeſus. With the ſweet ſenſe of this upon thy conſcience, perſuaded that God is at peace with thee, take up the inward croſs. In this delightful view ſee the curſe removed. Thou haſt no reaſon to fear wrath, or death, or hell. Victory over all ſins and enemies is certain. Daily, eternal victory is promiſed. In this faith follow the noble army, who carried this croſs to their graves. Fight as they did, looking unto Jeſus, Sin is in thee: it was in them; but they looked upon it as a vanquiſhed foe, ſlain, and put to death, when Jeſus died for ſin once. Likewiſe reckon thou alſo thyſelf to be in him dead unto ſin---freed from the condemning ſentence of the law---freed from the dreadful ſtroke of juſtice by his death--freed as truly as he is---and therefore thou art no more liable, than he is, to be condemned and puniſhed. And for the ſtrengthening of this faith, ſeek for fellowſhip with him in his death. It is thy privilege, as thou art planted in the likeneſs of his death to derive power and efficacy from it daily to put ſin to death. The more ſtedfaſtly thou believeſt, that thou art one with him in his death, the more wilt thou find thy ſinful nature crucified with him. Communion is always according to the faith of union with Chriſt. The ſtrongeſt faith muſt have the ſtrongeſt hold of him, and thereby draw the moſt virtue from him. It is true as our faith increaſes, we become

come more ſpiritual; and we ſee corruption more, as we ſee motes in the ſun beams. The ſenſes of the new man by exerciſe gain a quicker perception of ſin---we become all over tender as the eye--jealous of the motions---yea of the appearance of evil. This is real growth. Sin is more felt, in order that the power of Jeſus may be put forth to make us hate it, reſiſt it, and overcome it more. As believers are more ſenſible of their ſinfulneſs in the firſt Adam, ſo they grow up into the ſecond Adam the Lord from heaven: they bear the croſs of the corruption of the firſt, which leads them to conſtant fellowſhip with the ſecond--in his death, for the pardon of their corruption---in the power of his death to mortify ſin, that it may not have dominion over them.

Corruption is in thee, and it will ſtrive for dominion. Thy ſins will ſometimes fiercely aſſault. Their allies, the world and the devil, will join them with ſtratagems and force; when the battle is hot, and thou art weak, then it behoves thee to live by faith upon Jeſus as thy ſurety, now acting for thee in heaven, as he acted for thee upon earth. He is gone up, as thy high prieſt, to carry thy name within the veil. He bears it upon the ephod on his ſhoulders, and upon the breaſt-plate on his heart: his power and his love are engaged for thee, now he is in glory. He ſtands in the preſence of God, as

thy

thy repreſentative. The Father ſees thee in him: and thou art in his ſight what thy forerunner is. As he ſtands there, ſo doſt thou ſtand--righteous as he is righteous---holy as he is holy---beloved as he is beloved---and ſhalt be bleſſed as he is bleſſed. View by faith thy nature in him, exalted and glorified, and for the joy ſet before thee in him take up thy croſs. It is a heavy burden---it is a hard warfare. True. But conſider, who ſhall lay any thing to thy charge for indwelling ſin? It is God that juſtifieth thee from it. Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for thee. He appears in the preſence of God for thee, as thine interceſſor. He is always in court to repreſent thy perſon, and to carry thy cauſe, eſpecially as to what concerns ſin. " If any of us ſin, ſays the be-" loved diſciple, we have an advocate with " the Father Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he " is the propitiation for our ſins:" in this office he is ſkilful, and faithful, and compaſſionate. He has thine intereſt at heart---thy ſafety, thy comfort under this croſs, and thy victory over it. His very glory is ſo interwoven with thine, that they are one: yea the advocate and his clients form but one ſpiritual body, of which every member is, what the head is. O my God and Saviour, I bleſs thee and worſhip thee for acting for

for me as mine advocate and interceſſor in heaven. Increaſe, I beſeech thee my faith, that I may ſee more of the glory of thine office, and may make more uſe of it, in the bearing of mine inward croſs. O let thy faithful witneſs abide with me to enable me without doubt or wavering to truſt in what thou haſt done for me upon earth, and to draw comfort from what thou art now doing for me in heaven. Into thy hands I deſire to commit my cauſe. Lord, undertake for me. Be ſurety for thy ſervant for good, and guide me with thy counſel, till thou bring me to thy glory. I aſk this for thy mercies ſake. *Amen.* Is this the true ſtate of the caſe? Is it certain from the word of God? Is it confirmed from matter of fact? Did the higheſt believer upon earth experience this inward croſs? When his conſcience ſummoned him to the bar of God, and put him upon enquiring what he would plead there for his juſtification, had he any thing to urge but the ſacrifice and righteouſneſs of the ever bleſſed Immanuel? And is not this thy plea, O my ſoul? Doſt not thou find ſo much weakneſs and infirmity in thy holy things, that thou wouldſt ſeek atonement for the iniquity of them through the interceſſion of the great high prieſt? And thou wouldſt not think of ſtanding before the throne to claim eternal life as the reward due to thine own holineſs. Is not this thine experience? If it be, then take up thy croſs in this

FAITH. It is thy grief, that ſin is in thee. The motions and luſtings of it are thy burden. The reſiſting and oppoſing them is thy continual warfare. And thou haſt no proſpect before thee of enjoying perfect deliverance from this heavy croſs, until death releaſe thee. Bleſſed be God for the ſalvation that is in Chriſt Jeſus. There is a proviſion made in the covenant of grace for the pardon of indwelling ſin, for victory over it daily, and for the eternal deſtruction of the whole body of ſin: It ſhall have no exiſtence in the members, any more than it has in their glorified head. Here is a comfort for thee, O my ſoul, of God's own providing, and of God's own applying. When it is applied to thy heart, the croſs will be eaſy. Obſerve carefully what is revealed concerning the being of ſin in the beſt Chriſtians, and concerning the pardon of it. The Holy Ghoſt declares, it dwells in them, but they are forgiven all treſpaſſes--they are in Chriſt without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing---in the firſt Adam they are heirs of ſin, death, and hell, in the ſecond Adam the Lord from heaven they are heirs of righteouſneſs, life and glory. He is their covenant-head: And they are before God, what he is. This is the record of truth--- YE ARE COMPLETE IN HIM. Abide by it, O my ſoul. Give it full credit, and boldly plead it againſt all the charges of guilt, and fears of wrath--

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" It is true; I have ſin in me, but it is par-
" doned. God has forgiven me ALL treſpaſſes.
" I ſtand before him in my ſurety, who under-
" took for me, and I am perfect in him. The
" Father choſe me in his Son: He looks upon
" the face of his beloved, and ſees me in him.
" In him he is well-pleaſed, ſo he is with me.
" As he loves him, ſo he loves me. This is the
" glorious privilege, which by faith I now enjoy.
" I deny ſight and ſenſe; and I ſtick to the word
" of God. I adhere ſtrictly to its teſtimony con-
" cerning me, believing myſelf to be dead in-
" deed unto ſin in Chriſt, and in him abſolutely
" freed from guilt and condemnation. The
" Father is at peace with me, and he loves me
" in his Son, and with the ſame love with which
" he loves him--His Father and my Father.
" With this perſuaſion I go to war with my
" corruptions. I ſee their traiterous deſigns.
" They are fighting againſt every thing that is
" dear and precious to my ſoul. But having
" the promiſed grace of the almighty Saviour
" for my help, I deſire to ſet upon them in his
" name. I know he has them among mine
" other enemies under his feet, and I have his
" word for it that he will put them under mine.
" Yea, Lord I believe, and on thy faithful pro-
" miſe I truſt this day. Although I muſt carry
" my croſs, yet I bleſs thee and worſhip thee
" for removing curſe and wrath from it: I can

" now

" now take it up as thy ſoldier and fight againſt
" it in thy ſtrength, expecting victory from thee,
" and to thy glory. O my God, ſave me from
" indwelling ſin. Let me feel it my burden.
" Glorify thy grace in me, and by me, that be-
" ing endued with power from on high I may
" hold out reſiſting and conquering it, till thou
" give me everlaſting victory."

If this, O my ſoul, be thy conſtant dependence, then the croſs will become light. Guilt makes it heavy. The curſe in it makes it intolerable: but by faith thou canſt ſee guilt and curſe removed, then it will be no hindrance to thee in thy heavenly walk, but will daily call forth into uſe and exerciſe thoſe graces, which will help thee forward, and eſpecially

PATIENCE. Here is great need of patience --a continual war---and within thee---thine own boſom the ſeat of it---and thine own luſts carrying it on and maintaining it. The more ſpiritual thou art, the more wilt thou feel this inward conflict. The more thou groweſt into Chriſt, the more will thy corruptions ſtir and move--they will be thy continual plague, ſo that thou wilt not be able to draw any comfort from what thou art in thyſelf. Here is exerciſe for patience. Every where indwelling ſin is preſent with thee: Upon every temptation ready with its flatteries to entice, and with its power to break out into act and deed. The oppoſing it,

is like cutting off a right hand, and plucking out a right eye---as contrary to nature, as painful. The hand and the eye cannot be deſtroyed twice, but inbred luſts overcome a thouſand times are not in the leaſt diſcouraged from warring againſt the ſoul. Like the troubled ſea never at reſt, they are always caſting up ſome ſinful mire and dirt. What canſt thou do without faith in the Redeemer's blood, without patience to wait for the Redeemer's ſtrength. Every moment there is need of faith and patience, and every moment if theſe graces be exerciſed they will be improved. The bearing of the croſs continually, and fighting under it on the ſide of God will alſo be the means of teaching thee

THE TRUE SPIRITUAL MORTIFICATION, which does not conſiſt in ſin not being in thee, nor in its being put upon the croſs daily, nor yet in its being kept upon it. There muſt be ſomething more to eſtabliſh perfect peace in thy conſcience; and that is the teſtimony of God concerning the body of ſin. He has provided for thy perfect deliverance from it in Chriſt. Every thing needful for this purpoſe was finiſhed by him upon the croſs. He was thy ſurety. He ſuffered for thee. Thy ſins were crucified with him and nailed to his croſs. They were put to death when he died: for he was thy covenant head, and thou as a member of his body waſt legally repreſented by him, and art indeed dead to ſin

by his dying to ſin once. The law has now no more right to condemn thee, a believer, than it has to condemn him. Juſtice is bound to deal with thee, as it has with thy riſen and aſcended Saviour. If thou doſt not thus ſee thy complete mortification in him, ſin will reign in thee. No ſin can be crucified either in heart or life, unleſs it be firſt pardoned in conſcience: becauſe there will be want of faith to receive the ſtrength of Jeſus, by whom alone it can be crucified. If it be not mortified in its guilt, it cannot be ſubdued in its power. If the believer does not ſee his perfect deadneſs to ſin in Jeſus, he will open a wide door to unbelief: and if he be not perſuaded of his completeneſs in Chriſt, he gives room for the attacks of ſelf-righteous and legal tempers. If Chriſt be not all in all: ſelf muſt ſtill be looked upon as ſomething great, and there will be food left for the pride of ſelf-importance and ſelf-ſufficiency. So that he cannot grow into the death of Chriſt in ſenſible experience, farther than he believes himſelf to be dead to ſin in Chriſt. The more clearly and ſtedfaſtly he believes this, as the apoſtle did—

I AM CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST, in proportion will he cleave to Chriſt, and receive from him greater power to crucify ſin. This believing view of his abſolute mortification in Chriſt is the true goſpel method of mortifying ſin in our own perſons.

Examine then, O my ſoul, the miſtakes which thou haſt made, and the temptations which thou art under, concerning this leading truth in thy walk. Pray to thy God for his wiſdom to guide thee. Without it thou wilt be afraid, where no fear is. Thou wilt be inclined to think this doctrine rather encouraging to ſin: becauſe it ſeems to carnal reaſon to take off thy mind from watchfulneſs againſt it, and from praying for victory over it. But be aſſured this is a great error. If thou art not complete in Chriſt, thou never canſt be complete. Seek for the death of ſin where thou wilt, it is not to be found but in his death. Try to conquer it upon any other principle, than faith in his death, the very attempt is ſinful, and proves thee to be under the law. Unleſs thou art one with him in his death, there can be no pardon of ſin, and conſequently no victory over it. O fear not then to lay the whole weight of thy ſalvation upon Jeſus. Depend on him, as dying to ſin for thee, and look at thyſelf dead to ſin in him--as completely dead to it, as he is. Read the teſtimony of the holy Spirit. Study the infinite, the everlaſting ſufficiency of his death for thine abſolute freedom from guilt and condemnation. Truſt without wavering: be not afraid to view the everlaſting perfection of thy deliverance in Jeſus, and this will weaken the tyranny, and will crucify the power of ſin. This will, and nothing elſe can. Read the ſixth of

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the Romans, and pray for the Spirit of revelation to open it to thee. There thou wilt discover the true way to mortify sin. It is by believing, that thou art planted together with Christ in his death: from thence only thy pardon flows, from thence thy daily victory is received, and from thence thy eternal victory will be perfected. Fight on, soon thou shalt be, what Christ now is. The member shall be perfectly like the head. O glorious prospect! Thou shalt be with him and like him--spotless and fair, as Jesus, righteous and holy, happy in body and soul. Thou shalt see him as he is, and awaking after his likeness thou shalt be satisfied with it. Take up thy cross for the joy here set before thee. Bear it in faith. It will be light and easy to thy pardoned conscience: yea, the carrying of it in patience will bring forth many peaceable fruits of righteousness: Among the rest there is one, which in the sight of God is of great price, and which is daily improved by the inward cross, namely

Humility, which consists in the right knowledge of ourselves, not only of what we have been, but also of what we now are. The best and holiest man upon earth has a corrupt fallen nature: he has flesh still which is always lusting against the spirit. While he is alive to God he feels it. He is sensible of the inward conflict. Dead men indeed feel nothing. A dead corpse has no sense of the worms which are eating it up.

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He that has theſe luſts in him and warring againſt his ſoul, and yet does not feel them, cannot be ſpiritually alive. A natural man has no ſenſe of them, becauſe they are in him, as worms in a dead body: juſt ſo it is with the perfectioniſt. But ſo ſoon, and ſo long, as he lives to God, he will perceive them. If he be in happy communion with God, indwelling ſin is preſent to interrupt the enjoyment. If he exerciſe any grace, this beſetting ſin tries to weaken its actings. If he ſet about any duty, it will hinder him from doing it ſo perfectly, as God requires, and as he could wiſh. The abiding ſenſe of theſe truths will keep down pride. The believer will ſee nothing of his own to truſt in, no faith, or hope, or love, no faithfulneſs to grace, no holy obedience; all is ſtained and polluted. He is forced to cry out of his beſt duties--*unclean*--*unclean*. In this ſchool the diſciple learns to walk humbly with his God. The more he knows of himſelf, the more humble he becomes. And he grows in this heavenly grace, the more he is acquainted with the mercy of God in Jeſus. This learnt by divine teaching keeps the believer meek and lowly in his own eyes. Nothing ſoftens and melts the ſoul into holy tenderneſs like the ſenſe of God's mercy. A man who feels the plague of his own heart is never truly humbled, until he be pardoned. But when he is juſtified from all things in Chriſt, in him a partaker of all ſpiritual

ritual bleſſings in earth and heaven, when he ſees all his ſalvation of grace, of free ſovereign grace, flowing from the abſolute favor of electing love, and beſtowed upon him, as unworthy an object, as ever did or can partake of it, then he becomes truly broken hearted. Theſe truths taught of God bring every high thought into ſubjection to Chriſt Jeſus. The ſoul bows before him; lies low at his feet; proſtrates itſelf before the throne of his grace, and deſires to be kept willing to take all its bleſſings out of his hands, and to uſe them to his glory. This is goſpel humility, the true abaſement of ſpirit, with which a man, ſenſible that he is ſaved by mere mercy, lothes himſelf. And while the experience of indwelling ſin humbles him down to the duſt, it produces through God's grace the happieſt effects: for it keeps him in his ſtrong tower and ſanctuary, in which alone he is

SAFE. It is ever reminding him of his need of the blood of ſprinkling--ever ſhewing him his want of a perfect righteouſneſs--and ever preaching to him the neceſſity of his being kept by the power of God. And while he hearkens to theſe leſſons, truſting to Jeſus, he will ſtand faſt and be eſtabliſhed. The arm of the Lord God almighty will hold him up, and he ſhall be ſafe. While he lives thus out of himſelf, the ſenſe of indwelling ſin will lead him to his true

HAPPINESS,

HAPPINESS, which is all in the fulneſs of the God-man. He will enjoy the more of this, the leſs he finds in himſelf. When he cannot draw comfort from any thing of his own, he will ſeek it more in God. When all the ſtreams are dried up, he will get nearer to the fountain head, and live more upon it. This is the portion of the Lord's people, and the inheritance of all his ſaints. And in this view indwelling ſin is made the means of promoting their

HOLINESS. They ſee their continual need of Chriſt. They can do nothing without him; But believing their oneneſs with him, they deſire to improve it in experience. Every thing they do keeps them ſenſible of their ſins and wants, and ſhews them the neceſſity of living by the faith of the Son of God. This is true humility. The more they are humbled, the more they receive out of the fulneſs of Jeſus: for he giveth more grace--more, to produce nearer fellowſhip with him in his death, whereby ſin will be more dead, and in his reſurrection, whereby the ſoul will be more alive to God. So that the humbleſt believer is the neareſt to God, and is the ſafeſt, happieſt, and holieſt of all the men upon earth: Becauſe he has moſt fellowſhip with God. He dwells in God, and God in him. Meditate, O my ſoul, upon this uſe of the croſs. Is ſin in thee? Doſt thou feel it, and art thou fighting againſt

againſt it? And does not this humble thee? Art thou freely forgiven all treſpaſſes, indwelling ſin among the reſt? Doſt thou know that thou art a ſaved ſinner---a brand plucked out of hell? And does not this humble thee? I ſee reaſon enough to be humbled, but I feel pride in me luſting againſt humility. O my precious Jeſus, humble me under thy mighty hand. To thee I look for all my ſalvation. Lord, ſave me from pride. Thou haſt made me willing to be taught of thee to be meek and lowly, and I come to thee praying, that the diſciple may be as his maſter. O let me drink deep into thy Spirit. In every day's warfare againſt my corruptions, enable me to renounce myſelf, that I may find thou art carrying both me and my croſs. Keep me humbled at thy feet, that thou mayeſt exalt me in due time. I pray to thee, my precious Saviour, for this grace, to mine eternal humbling, and to thine eternal exaltation. In life and death, and for evermore I hope to glory only in the Lord, and to triumph in the God of my ſalvation.

Thus the believer learns to walk humbly under the inward croſs. He is brought to truſt all in the Saviour's hand. Daily he diſcovers more of the ruins of the fall, which lead him to freſh diſcoveries of the perfect ſalvation in Jeſus. If he attend to what is paſſing in his own breaſt, he finds his need of a Saviour every moment and for every

every thing, by which means he grows in grace and in the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus his Lord. He learns to put no confidence in the fleſh, but to rejoice only in his completeneſs in Jeſus, from whom all his comforts and victories are received. Thus while ſelf is laid low, the Saviour is exalted, and his perfect work is more depended on. The believer by hope and love attains more delightful communion with his God. Indwelling ſin is his croſs, but he bears it, looking unto Jeſus: from whom he receives ſtrength to go on, yea to run the race ſet before him. By faith he ſees in Jeſus the corruption of his nature condemned and dead in law: he beholds himſelf freed from this, as well as from his other ſins. Guilt is the moſt galling part of this croſs; but when guilt is thus removed from the conſcience, then the croſs grows light. When taken up in faith and carried in love to the almighty Saviour, then it does not ſtop the believer in his fellowſhip with Jeſus, or in his happy walk with him. Glory be to thee, my Lord, of this I have ſome experience. Yes, precious Jeſus, I know the infinite value of that ſacrifice, which put away ſin. I bleſs thee for that offering, which perfects for ever. Intereſted in it, I would not diſtruſt my completeneſs in thee. Through thy holy nature, I expect to be renewed after thy likeneſs. The fountain for cleanſing from the filth of ſin ſtands open: in it I daily

wath

wash my spotted soul. In thy divine righteousness I see the law and justice of the Father infinitely honored by justifying me, and dealing with me, as perfectly righteous. Complete in thee I am. In thy work finished upon earth I am perfect, and am represented as such by thee in heaven. I believe thou appearest there as my divine intercessor, bearing my name upon thy shoulders and upon thy breast with a glory beyond all the precious stones in the world. O my blessed Jesus, increase this faith. Lead me from faith to faith; that while I am travelling heavenwards mine eye and my heart may be more simply fixed upon thee. Come thou glorifier of the Saviour, and discover to me more of the sinfulness of sin, and of my need of his salvation. Holy Spirit, teach me in the deepest sense of indwelling sin to trust wholly to the offering of the body of Jesus. O lead me to his cross, there to see all my sins nailed, crucified with him, dead in his death, buried in his grave: in this faith strengthen me mightily to resist and to conquer my corruptions. Enable me to experience the power of his cross, that I may feel sin weakened in the love and in the practice of it. Almighty Spirit, in my daily warfare I find no strength less than thine can make me conqueror: and therein thou hast caused me to put my trust. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the antient days in the generations

of

of old: Art thou not it that cut the pride of nature to pieces, and wounded the old dragon? O my God, magnify thine arm in ſubduing every ſin. Thou ſeeſt my naked heart, and its ſighings are not hid from thee. My corruptions are indeed my croſs: and they would have been a ſore burden too heavy for me to bear, if the curſe had not been taken out of them. But ſtill pardoned as they are, yet in this tabernacle I do groan being burdened. I believe the day is coming when I ſhall have perfect and eternal freedom from ſin and ſorrow. The firſt fruits of this only make me long the more for the bleſſed harveſt. But I deſire to wait in hope, bearing my croſs, till thy will be done. O Lord make me willing to reſiſt, give me power to overcome indwelling ſin, till the day of redemption, and mortality be ſwallowed up of life. Hear me, my good God, and anſwer me for thy name's ſake, to the glory of Father, Son, and Spirit, the three in one Jehovah, to whom my heart now bows in worſhip, and my ſoul hopes ſoon to join the ſong of never ceaſing praiſe. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The believer fights the good fight of faith and goes forth conquering and to conquer.

WHEN the believer has been diſciplined under the croſs, and has learned to bear it with patience, the Captain of his ſalvation has other exerciſes for him. He has choſen him to be a ſoldier, and he intends to teach him to endure hardneſs. His life in Chriſt is one continued battle, not only againſt fleſh and blood, but alſo againſt principalities and powers of earth and hell: He cannot diſcover their ſtratagems, nor overcome their aſſaults, but by being ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus. His warfare is therefore to be carried on entirely by faith. The principles before laid down muſt be brought into uſe. What the ſpirit of God had diſcovered to him of his ſalvation in Jeſus is to be tried in every battle, and if it be maintained, it will be improved. If he hold faſt the confidence of his faith, he will behave like a good ſoldier. If he always take up arms in abſolute dependence on the divine General to give him courage, to order him how to attack his enemies, to beſtow ſtrength upon him daily to reſiſt them, then victory will be certain: Yea he will be invincible, while he ſtands

ſtands ſtrong in the Lord and in the power of his might. He will meditate upon the principles, which he had been taught of God, and will find peace in his own conſcience and joy in his heart by bringing them into daily experience. His believing views of the warfare to which he is called will be ſuch as theſe——

I am through ſovereign grace called to fight under the banner of Jeſus—He has not left me to fight as uncertainly, but he has conquered all mine enemies for me, and he has undertaken to conquer them all in me. It is true, I am weak, but my Redeemer is ſtrong, the Lord of hoſts is his name. He has ſaved me from my ſins, from the ſhame and pain of them, from the wicked one, and the wicked world, from the curſe of the law, and from the wrath of God. He has given me a divine righteouſneſs for my juſtification, and in it I am accepted before the throne: He has put it upon me for ornament and defence —it is a garment of ſalvation—which cannot be loſt upon earth, and which will ſhine with never-fading beauty in heaven. The Father is perfectly reconciled, and loves me with a love that paſſes knowledge. I believe it. God is on my ſide: I need not fear what any enemy can do unto me. He has taken me into his protection. By his allwiſe counſel I am guided; by his almighty arm I am defended. My battles are the Lord's. Indeed mine enemies are many, and they

they are too cunning and too mighty for me. But why do they now fight againſt me? Is it not, becauſe God is my friend? They hate me, becauſe he loves me. While I lived in friendſhip with them, and was at war with God, they were always trying to make me happy. But ever ſince I fled to Jeſus for refuge, and ſought redemption in his blood, they have taken up arms againſt me: And they have raged more furiouſly ſince I was enabled to believe in him. But I have no reaſon to fear their oppoſition. With them is an arm of fleſh, but with me is the Lord my God to help me, and to fight my battles. I may therefore go to my daily warfare in faith, regarding the commands, waiting for the fulfilling of the promiſes of my God, and relying upon the proviſion, which he has made for my preſent and for mine eternal victory.

Are thy meditations, O my ſoul, like theſe upon the Chriſtian warfare? Examine thyſelf. If thou art at peace with God, thou muſt expect war. It is unavoidable. If it be in thy heart to pleaſe him who hath choſen thee to be a ſoldier, then all the powers of wickedneſs will be in arms. Night and day with never ceaſing rage they will purſue thee. Deep laid plans will be formed, and fierce aſſaults will be made againſt thy true happineſs. They will be attempting, ſo long as thou art in the world, by ſome cunning or force to draw thee from thy God.

Thy

Thy life from henceforth is to be one continued battle. Thy victory depends every moment upon holding faſt thy confidence in God: And therefore thou muſt bring the principles of the doctrine of Chriſt into exerciſe. Thou haſt ſeen how neceſſary they are for every ſtep of thy walk, and thou wilt find them equally neceſſary for every part of thy warfare. This is a leading truth—Thine enemies are God's enemies. Once thou didſt join with them, and waſt on their ſide fighting againſt God, but he has ſaved thee from the guilt of thy rebellion. In free love he choſe thee in his Son, and in ſovereign mercy gave him for thee. The Son rejoiced to do his Father's will for thy ſalvation: He did it in his life: He ſuffered it in his death. The ever glorious work is finiſhed. And it has been given thee on the behalf of Chriſt to believe. The Lord the Spirit has ſatisfied thy conſcience, and has comforted thy heart with the knowledge of this perfect ſalvation. The Father is thy Father in Jeſus---thine by his own free gift---thine by his own unchangeable purpoſe--and now thine by thy free choice. He has made thee willing in the day of his power to take him for thy God. He is perfectly reconciled unto thee in his Son: And ſhould not this perfectly reconcile thee to him? His love to thee is wonderful in all its properties, in its riſe and origin, and in its free and full communication of every covenant bleſs-

ſing: And does not the belief of this engage thy heart in love to God? Doſt thou not love him for his love to thee, and is it not thy daily prayer, that thy love may abound yet more and more? Has not the ſenſe of this peace and love been improved in thy daily walk with him? Haſt thou not found the truth, and enjoyed the comfort of theſe graces in thine experience? O fear not then, ſince God is on thy ſide---fear not, O my ſoul, to go to war with any enemy, who would rob thee of the peace of God in thy conſcience, or of the love of God in thy heart. This is the deſign of all thoſe who fight againſt thee. They want to ſhake thy confidence in God, and ſo to draw thee from him. They know, they cannot ſucceed, while thou ſtandeſt ſtrong in the Lord, truſting to his being thy reconciled God, and loving Father. O keep this truſt in him, as the apple of thine eye---bind it continually to thy heart in love---and fight for it as for thy precious life. Be aſſured, no enemies can prevail againſt thee, until they have firſt overcome thy faith: becauſe while thou makeſt God thy refuge and ſtrength, his almighty arm will be thy defence. Be not afraid, ſays he, I am with thee, and I will keep thee by my power through faith unto ſalvation.

In this warfare it is the chief buſineſs of the believer to have reſpect to the orders given him. He is entirely to depend on the Captain of his

ſalvation. What has he ſaid, O my ſoul, to encourage thee to go to battle without fear? Mind his deſcription---it is THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH, in which thou art engaged. By faith thou art to attack thy foes: by faith alone thou canſt conquer them: and faith muſt have his

COMMANDS, or elſe it can have no lawful warrant to fight, and no juſt ground to expect victory. Indeed if he had ſpoken nothing, there could have been no faith: for his word comes firſt---it is ſpoken---it is heard---and then faith comes by hearing. Look well then to his word. Study it carefully. If thou obey it aright, thou art abſolutely ſafe in the hotteſt battle, and thy victory is as certain, as if the crown was already upon thy head. Theſe are " his ſtanding orders---Fear thou not, for I am " with thee: be not afraid, for I am thy God, I " will ſtrengthen thee, yea I will help thee, yea I " will uphold thee with the right hand of my " righteouſneſs. Behold all they that were in- " cenſed againſt thee ſhall be aſhamed and con- " founded: they ſhall be as nothing, and they " that ſtrive with thee ſhall periſh. Thou ſhalt " ſeek them, and ſhalt not find them, even them " that contended with thee: they that war " againſt thee ſhall be as nothing, and as a thing " of nought: for the Lord thy God will hold " thy right hand, ſaying unto thee---fear not, I " will help thee. Fear not thou worm Jacob,

" and

" and ye men of Iſrael: I will help thee, ſaith " the Lord, and thy Redeemer the holy One of " Iſrael." Are theſe indeed the words of God? Does he command poor worms, weak and defenceleſs, to go to war without fear? Does he encourage them to look up to his arm, promiſing to be on their ſide? Yes, the Lord of hoſts fights for them. All their enemies are his, and therefore they may ſafely truſt, and not be afraid. O my ſoul, read carefully, read again and again, mark and inwardly digeſt every word of this divine command; and in obedience to it expect his help. Face thine enemies, whoever they be, with holy boldneſs: For God is with thee. He has undertaken to fight thy battles. Look at this ſcripture. Canſt thou meditate on it, and yet be afraid? Of whom, or of what? O vile unbelieving fear! Beg of God to ſave thee from it. Honor the Captain of thy ſalvation. Truſt him. Doubt not but thou art as ſafe, obeying his orders, and expecting his help, as almighty power can make thee. Obſerve the courage of one of thy fellow ſoldiers. Obſerve his victory —" When I cry unto thee, then ſhall mine ene- " mies be turned back: this I know, for God is " on my ſide. In God will I praiſe his word; " in the Lord will I praiſe his word: in God " have I put my truſt, I will not be afraid what " man can do unto me." The enemies of David came to ſwallow him up, but he encouraged

himself in the Lord his God. He attended to his orders. He considered the word which was spoken to him. He depended upon it, and had reason to praise God for his faithfulness: for God fulfilled it unto him. There was in it a

PROMISE, as well as a command--do this--and I will be with thee. The promise is always made good to them who keep the command in faith. The one is our divine warrant to fight, the other is our encouragement to fight in certain hopes of victory. Attend, O my soul, to the promise, and fear not the accomplishment of it---" In righteousness shalt thou be established; " thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou " shalt not fear, and from terror, for it shall not " come near thee. Behold, they shall surely " gather together, but not by me: whosoever " shall gather together against thee, shall fall " for thy sake. Behold, I have created the " smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and " that bringeth forth an instrument for his work, " and I have created the waster to destroy. No " weapon that is formed against thee shall pros- " per, and every tongue that shall rise in judgment " against thee, thou shalt condemn. This is the " heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their " righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Thou art here forewarned of thine enemies: they *shall* gather against thee. But the Lord is not with them. He is thy defender and mighty deliverer,

and he will bring all oppoſition to nought for thy ſake. However numerous their hoſts may be, yet they ſhall fall. Whatever weapons of war they may form, yet none of them ſhall proſper. This is the certain heritage of all believers. Their righteouſneſs and their ſtrength is of me, ſaith the Lord---I will fight their battles, and I will never leave them nor forſake them: I will make them daily conquerors, and behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promiſed them, I will make them more than conquerors.

Is this, O my ſoul, the infallible word of promiſe? Has the Lord of hoſts undertaken to ſtand by his people? Has he engaged to lead them out to war by his wiſdom, to defend them in battle by his power, and to give them eternal victory to the praiſe of his own grace? O what motives are theſe to ſtrengthen thy heart and thy hands. What haſt thou reaſon to fear, ſince the almighty is on thy ſide? The battle is his. If hoſts of enemies oppoſe, yet following his orders, and truſting to his ſtrength, thy victory is infallibly ſure: For then thou wilt fight againſt them ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and thou wilt be invincible

In the whole armor of God. This armor is the proviſion, which God has made for the ſafety of his ſoldiers. He puts it on them, and he keeps it on them. It is a whole armor, a complete

a complete defence from head to foot. In great mercy their God, who provided it, has revealed to them the uſe of every part. In the ſixth of the Epheſians the apoſtle has deſcribed it at large. He ſuppoſes them to be acquainted with the chriſtian doctrines, and to have walked in the comfort of them, and he calls upon them to bring them into practice in their daily warfare. " It only remains my brethren, ſays he, that ye be " ſtrong in the Lord," for no ſtrength leſs than his can keep you, " and in the might of what " he is able to do"---by faith relying upon his promiſe, and truſting to his power, " putting " on the whole armor of God," that being ſtrengthened mightily by the Spirit in the inner man, ye may be preſerved dependent upon the Lord, and enabled to engage in his ſtrength, and to conquer to his glory. Unleſs you thus rely upon his word and arm, you will not be able to ſtand againſt the wiles of the devil: for we wreſtle not only againſt fleſh and blood, but alſo againſt principalities, againſt powers, againſt the rulers of the darkneſs of this world; againſt ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places: therefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be enabled to withſtand in the evil day againſt the combined legions of earth and hell, and after ye have done all to ſtand conquerors in the field of battle, when your enemies are driven out of it. Stand therefore having your loins

loins girt about with truth---this is the firſt grace in uſe---

SAVING KNOWLEDGE; which the holy Spirit teaches. He guides believers into all truth neceſſary for their ſalvation. As the military girdle went round the loins, and bound all the armor together, ſo the knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jeſus, binds together all the graces. It is of the eſſence of every one of them---it is light in the underſtanding to diſcover what they are, that they may be received into the heart in love, and that in obeying the truth their influence may operate upon the life and converſation. When a man is thus taught of God, then he ſees his need of the breaſt-plate of righteouſneſs, and he puts it on, namely the

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS of the God-man. The breaſt-plate was armor for the vital parts---ſo is the righteouſneſs of Chriſt---it is a perfect protection from every ſtroke of every enemy. He that wears it upon his heart, believing in the life and death of Immanuel, has armor proof againſt all weapons. If the ſtrength of his adverſaries could be collected into one arm, which was to ſtrike one mighty blow, his breaſt-plate would ward it off. The armor of God could not be hurt. The ſoldier with it on cannot periſh, but ſhall have everlaſting life. Therefore covered with this invincible breaſt-plate he may face the ſtouteſt foes, and attack them without fear. He

may

may march on undaunted, " having his feet " ſhod with the preparation of the goſpel of " peace."

PEACE WITH GOD through Jeſus Chriſt is another grace of the Spirit, which mightily ſtrengthens the inner man. Whoever ſees the truth of the goſpel, and believes it, will diſcover God to be at peace with him, perfectly reconciled to him in Jeſus, and who out of his fatherly love will over-rule all things for his good. In the ſenſe of this he may go on with holy boldneſs, as the ſoldier did with his greaves on. When his feet and legs were armed with them he was not afraid of thorns or briers, of rough roads or ſharp ſpikes. In like manner the peace, which the goſpel brings, carries the Chriſtian ſoldier fearleſs through difficulties. He will march on conquering, if he keep on his greaves. If he maintain peace with God through Jeſus Chriſt, he will not be ſtopt by war, or trouble, or temptation. But he muſt remember, that to every piece of armor faith is eſſentially neceſſary---the girdle is good for nothing without the belief of the truth---the breaſt-plate is no defence without faith in the righteouſneſs of God our Saviour ---the greaves are no more than if the feet were covered with a bit of thin gauze, unleſs faith be mixed with the goſpel: " Therefore TO ALL " THESE take the ſhield of faith, wherewith ye " ſhall be able to quench all the fiery darts of " the

" the wicked one." What excellent things are here ſpoken of

FAITH, as a grace of the holy Spirit! When they uſed to fight with bows and arrows, the ſoldier could hold up his ſhield and keep himſelf ſafe: ſo the Chriſtian ſoldier, if the fiery darts of ſatan fly thick about him, by faith will quench them all. He has much combuſtible within him, and one ſpark would ſet him in a flame, if he had not his ſhield: but armed with it and oppoſing it to the arrows of the wicked one, he may lift up his head with joy: " For he has the " helmet of ſalvation" upon it. The grace here meant is

HOPE, and it is fitly compared to an helmet, which was armor for the head, and a defence for all the ſenſes which are ſeated in the head. It is called the helmet of SALVATION, becauſe it ALWAYS SAVES. It never can be deſtroyed. None of the ſenſes of the ſpiritual man can periſh in this warfare: and therefore it is a hope that maketh not aſhamed. Hope with its helmet on fears no blows. It can truly ſay, I am commanded to be ſtrong and of good courage, not to be afraid or diſmayed: for the Lord my God is with me, whitherſoever I go. Truſting to this command, hope is in wars and fightings full of glory and immortality. The Lord's orders to march forward are the ground of hope: and this ſupplies him with a weapon, which none of his enemies

enemies can withſtand, even the ſword of the Spirit, " which is the

WORD OF GOD." The ſcripture is called a ſword—(an offenſive weapon---and it is the only one, which the chriſtian ſoldier has---all the reſt being for his defence) becauſe it is mighty through the Spirit working by it to cut off all oppoſers. Our Lord in combat with the old ſerpent defeated him with this ſword. And the noble army of his followers, now crowned in glory, overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and *by the word of their teſtimony*---they held faſt their confidence in the word, and with it, as with a two edged ſword they ſlew the old dragon. and gained eternal victory over him. Fight againſt him, O my ſoul, with the ſame weapon. Keep the ſword in thy hand. Thou wilt ſtand in need of it every moment againſt that ſubtle foe. The word is the means of overcoming the devil, and it is mighty through God, when heard and read in faith, and inwardly digeſted by prayer. The beſt ſoldier in the Lord's army is beſt acquainted with the neceſſity of prayer: he not only believes what God ſays of his armor, but he alſo depends upon him for the daily experience of it: and therefore when he has put his armor on, in the

PRAYER OF FAITH he calls upon the Captain of his ſalvation for orders, courage, ſtrength, victory, and every thing needful---" Praying al-

" ways

" ways with all prayer and ſupplication in the " Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perſe- " verance." O my God, teach me thus to pray. I would depend on thee, and expreſs my dependence without ceaſing: for I am ſenſible that without thee I can do nothing. Although thou haſt choſen me to be a ſoldier, yet I have neither counſel nor ſtrength for war. My fooliſh heart loves eaſe: it would have the crown, but it would be excuſed ſtriving lawfully for it. I find nothing in myſelf that diſpoſes me to endure the hardſhip of the chriſtian warfare. My whole truſt therefore is in thee Jeſus, my Lord, and my God. Thou haſt called me to the battle: thou muſt fit me for it, keep me in it, and make me conqueror. All is of thee. The whole armor of God, which I have received, the ſaving knowledge, the righteouſneſs and the peace, that precious faith and glorious hope, that ſure word, wherein thou haſt cauſed me to put my truſt---theſe are the gifts of thy grace: and on thee, my Jeſus, I entirely depend for the right uſe of them. Thou muſt ſtill cover my head in the day of battle. Mine eyes are lifted up to thee, my hopes centre in thee, from whom alone cometh all my ſalvation. O Lord of hoſts, keep me in this ſimple dependence upon thy word and arm, that I may exerciſe thy graces in fighting thy battles: and if thou art pleaſed to give me daily victory, I may be willing to return thee all glory. O faithful promiſe-keeping God, ſtand

by

by me, and enable me to hold out, till I finiſh my courſe with joy, and my warfare being ended, I may bleſs thee for evermore for that peace, which paſſeth all underſtanding. O grant me this for thy mercies ſake. *Amen.*

If this be thy dependence, if thou art ſtanding in the Lord's ſtrength, and truſting entirely to his armor, then conſider, O my ſoul, thy ſafety in every battle. If thou go to war, calling upon thy God to be with thee, and to give thee victory, then victory is certain. Thou canſt not be conquered, if thou fight in faith, relying upon the orders of thy General, expecting his promiſed help, and waiting for it in prayer, truſting to the armor, which he has put upon thee. Is this then thy defence? Doſt thou *pray always*---begin the good fight---carry it on---and end it, with the prayer of faith? Bleſſed be his holy name, ſince this is in ſome meaſure thy caſe: go on in his ſtrength, and fear not to fight his battles, who hath choſen thee to be a ſoldier. Be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen thy heart. The more bold thou art in thy faith, the ſtronger ſhalt thou be in thy warfare: for whatever thou haſt courage to do at his command, thou ſhalt perform in his ſtrength. And why ſhould a doubt ariſe? Haſt thou forgotten, that the great deciſive battle has been fought and won. Immanuel ſtood up, the great champion for his people. The almighty warrior entered the liſts with their enemies, and

he

he conquered all their hosts. He triumphed over satan and the world, over sin and death; and he led captivity captive. Remember, he calls upon thee to share in his victory, by faith to partake with him of the spoils, and to keep the vanquished enemies daily under thy feet. He has made them his footstool, and he will make them thine. This is thy warfare. And what hast thou to fear in it? What hurt can a dead man do thee? If he has a gun charged in his hand he cannot fire it. He is not able to stir a finger. No more able is any adversary to destroy thee. Whilst thou art trusting to the complete victory of Jesus, thou wilt daily share with him in it. And the more simple thy trust is in him, the greater conquest will he give thee, because he will then receive from thee greater glory. How should this consideration inspire thee with courage---it is for his glory that thou shouldst conquer. Thy God commands thee to fight on his side, promises to assist thee, has provided invincible armor, and has in his own person engaged and defeated every enemy, against whom thou art to fight; and therefore he requires thee in obedience to his orders, depending on his promises and armor, to bring him glory by conquering in his strength. O my soul, hast thou not a zeal to promote the honor of thy Saviour? Is not his fame and renown very near thy heart? Dost thou not think it a privilege to be any ways instrumental in exalting his great name? Yes,

Lord,

Lord, thou haſt made me willing to glorify thee. Thou art my lawful king, and I deſire to honor thee by following thine orders, fighting thy battles, and relying entirely upon thy promiſes. I would not queſtion thy faithfulneſs to them, nor fear any enemy againſt whom thou haſt commanded me to fight. I would not doubt of thy ſtrength to carry me through the battle, or to give me the promiſed victory. In this faith I conduct my warfare, and I would have all my ſucceſs to bring freſh glory to thee. I know that the courage, which I have in the field of battle, is not from nature, but from grace. It ariſes from the belief that I am armed with the whole armor of God, and that the enemies againſt whom I fight are his as well as mine—his—whom he conquered for me—and is now conquering in me—and all to his own praiſe. From hence, Lord, ariſes my ſure and certain hope of victory. I ground it on thy word. I fight in faith. I truſt to thy complete victory, and now I am ſharing in it. My daily victories are only the fruit and effect of thine. O my almighty Jeſus, give me grace to aſcribe all the glory to thee. It is thy due. Make me willing to give it thee for the victories obtained for me, and in me. O keep me by thine almighty power through faith, till I have fought the good fight and won the prize. Grant me this, bleſſed king of ſaints, to thine eternal honor and glory. *Amen.*

CHAP. XII.

The believer marches on fighting the good fight of faith, and daily gains victory over the world.

THE world ſignifies the viſible frame of nature; not the earth only, but alſo the preſent conſtitution of the univerſe of animate and inanimate beings: All which were created good at firſt, but through the ſin of man, and the juſt ſentence of God, are now ſubject to vanity.

The world is become a great enemy to fallen man: Becauſe it is always preſenting ſomething to his ſenſes, which is a temptation to ſin. It keeps him from God by its flatteries, promiſing to make him happy in its enjoyments. It ſets them before him. He looks, and loves. He gives his heart a willing ſacrifice to the world, and ſuffers himſelf to be entirely influenced by its hopes and fears.

While man was innocent, every object raiſed in him ſome ſpiritual idea, and thereby led him to contemplate and adore the great Creator in his works: But upon the fall he loſt this uſe of natural objects: They did not as they ſtruck upon the ſenſes, excite correſpondent ideas in the mind:

Becauſe

Becauſe the man was alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in him. His underſtanding was in darkneſs: He could not ſee the things of the ſpirit of God; neither indeed could he know them for want of ſpiritual diſcernment. Being thus deprived of the image and likeneſs of God in knowledge, having no will but the will of the fleſh, and his heart being at enmity with God, he ſinks into communion with the creature. His very mind is carnal. His affections are earthly. His purſuits are after temporal things. His enjoyments are in the delights of ſenſe. In this ſtate he lives a mere animal life without God in the world.

Indeed he has within him an immortal ſoul; but it is apoſtate. It is fallen from God, and has no more communion with him by nature, than the devil has. The law has condemned it to death---The ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die---and it is already ſpiritually dead to God, being as incapable of quickening itſelf as a dead corpſe is. Therefore it cannot attain of itſelf any true knowledge of God, or have any real fellowſhip with the things of God. While fallen man is in this ſtate, his earthly and ſenſual appetites take the lead; and all the light in his mind, and the deſires of his heart only diſpoſe him to ſeek for their preſent gratification. Outward objects offer themſelves to him; they make an impreſſion upon his ſenſes, and ſometimes act upon them

them very forcibly, ſoliciting and enticing to the enjoyment of ſome fancied good, and ſo long as he continues an unregenerate man, theſe temptations prevail, and keep him from God. He does not ſee God in outward objects. He does not love God for them. He does not enjoy them to the glory of God. God is not in all his thoughts.

Man has been called a microcoſm. He is ſo wonderfully made, that the whole creation comes under the obſervation of ſome of his ſenſes. His eye, by means of light, can diſcover the form and ſurface of all objects. The ear takes in all ſounds. The noſe perceives all vapours and ſmells. The palate taſtes all ſorts of fluids. All ſorts of ſolids come under the ſenſe of feeling, which is in every part of the body, for the benefit and preſervation of the whole. Thus every object in the univerſe is fitted to act upon ſome of the ſenſes, and was intended by the Creator, to excite ſome ſpiritual idea. But this uſe was loſt by the fall. The impreſſion made by outward objects does not raiſe up the mind to God, and excite adoration and praiſe, but keeps the heart from him, and affords a continual temptation to live to the world, and to the things of it. Whatever is preſented to the eye, to the ear, &c. can ſtir up and bring forth evil. And actually does, according to the ſcripture: For "the whole world (as fallen from God) lieth in

" wickedneſs," and is at enmity with him; and therefore believers are commanded---" Love ye " not the world, neither the things that are in " the world; if any man love the world, the " love of the Father is not in him: For all that " is in the world, the luſt of the fleſh, and the " luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not " of the Father, but is of the world." Mind, ALL that is in the world is the means of feeding ſome luſt: For which reaſon the apoſtle calls it--- " this preſent evil world"---evil, becauſe of ſin, and becauſe of its temptations to keep the heart in love with it, and to ſhut out the love of the Father.

How awfully ſolemn are theſe ſcriptures! What ſtrict examination, O my ſoul, ſhould they put thee upon! Search, and try thyſelf by them; and ſee whether thou art ſaved from the love of the world. It is a bleſſed part of redemption, and it is one of the brighteſt jewels in the Redeemer's crown. How infinitely glorious is this character---" Jeſus Chriſt gave himſelf for our ſins, that he might deliver us from this preſent evil world." This deliverance is worthy of God. We had ſinned by loving this preſent evil world, and he came to ſave us from our ſins: It ruled over our hearts and lives, and kept us under its tyranny, and he came to deliver us from the love and from the power of it. Thrice happy are they, for whom he thus gave himſelf.

himſelf. O my ſoul, read and ſtudy the everlaſting honors of this great victory, and ſee, whether thou art indeed a partaker of them. Jehovah was made fleſh for his people, and as their divine ſurety came to conquer their enemies, the world among the reſt. He was in their nature to enter into open war with it, and to overcome every temptation, by which it had drawn Adam or any of his deſcendents from God. Thus he was to conquer the world *for* them; and then by his Spirit he was to conquer it *in* them. He begun the battle with his firſt breath, and every moment of his life he was victorious. The world has its ſnares for every age and ſtate, but he fell into none of them. His hands were clean, His heart was pure. He never lift up his ſoul to vanity. He was in his infancy *the holy child* Jeſus: And he grew in wiſdom and ſtature. When he was twelve years old he was wiſer than his teachers; For he ſat in the midſt of the doctors both hearing them, and aſking them queſtions: And all that heard him were aſtoniſhed at his underſtanding and anſwers. His delight was in the law of the Lord, and in his law did he meditate day and night---He ſaw things as they are there deſcribed in their true nature. The world could not impoſe upon him. He lived above its offers of good. And he feared not the worſt of its threatened evils. When he begun his miniſtry he

fought a pitcht battle; and became an eternal conqueror: The prince of this world was permitted to try every object by which the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, or the pride of life, had ſeduced mankind. They were preſented to Chriſt in their richeſt dreſs. The beauty, the pleaſure, the honor, and riches of the world were ſet before him in all their glory. But they made no impreſſion. They did not darken his underſtanding, nor influence his heart, nor provoke any ſenſual appetite. He rejected every pleaſing offer: He withſtood every flattering allurement. Thus he conquered the world; but not for himſelf. His victory over all its temptations was for his people. He accounted their enemies his. He fought their battles. He conquered, as a king for his ſubjects. And he gives them to ſhare with him in his triumph, when they believe in him: for thus he encourages them—"Theſe things have I "ſpoken unto you, that in me ye might have "peace, in the world ye ſhall have tribulation; "but be of good courage, I HAVE OVERCOME "THE WORLD." The world is your enemy. It had you in bondage, and you could not free yourſelves: therefore I came in your nature, God manifeſt in the fleſh, to conquer it for you; and I have obtained a perfect conqueſt. When I have proclaimed it to your conſciences, and pardoned your idolatrous attachment to the world—when IN me ye have found peace, yet ſtill the world

will be your enemy. Becauſe I have choſen you out of it, therefore it will hate you. My peace will occaſion and increaſe your tribulation in it. But fear not. Remember it is a vanquiſhed foe. Attack it in my ſtrength, as partakers of my victory. Fight againſt it, and treat it, as under my feet and made my footſtool. Whenever it tempts you, depend abſolutely upon my conqueſt, and you will find my grace almighty to crucify the world to you, and you to it.

How animating are theſe words! with what courage ſhould they inſpire the Chriſtian ſoldier! although the world be his enemy, yet it cannot conquer him, and rob him of his crown. The main battle has been fought, the victory is gained, and the conqueror is already crowned in the name and perſon of all the redeemed. By faith he gives them their ſhare in his victory, as it is written--" Whatſoever is born of God over-" cometh the world, and this is the victory that " overcometh the world, even our faith." Every perſon who is born again by the Spirit has a new nature ſpiritual and heavenly, and has new ſenſes to exerciſe about ſpiritual things. His renewed faculties are formed for heavenly things, as his bodily ſenſes are for material. By faith he ſees a better world than this, and ſurveys its beauties and glories. He has ears to hear the joyful ſound of goſpel grace, and to receive it. When that name, which is dear and precious above every name,

name, is preached, it is to him as ointment poured forth: the ſweet ſmelling ſavor refreſhes his heart and exhilarates his ſpirits. Then he taſtes that the Lord is gracious---foretaſtes his heavenly love, and as truly lays hold of and enjoys its ſpiritual bleſſings, as he ever did of any thing material. He is created anew in Chriſt Jeſus, not only that he may know theſe things, but may alſo partake of them---as truly now by faith, as he ever will by ſenſe: And the more he knows and the more he partakes of them, the more will he be delivered from this preſent evil world: "For this is the victory that over-"cometh the world, even our faith." By faith we ſee the victory of Chriſt, and reſt upon it, and the more ſafely we put our truſt and confidence in it, the more fellowſhip we ſhall have with him in its fruits---more wiſdom to ſee the vanity of the world, as he ſaw it---more grace to deliver us from the love of it---and more ſtrength to ſubdue its temptations. Theſe are ſome of the happy effects of his conqueſts, which he left us to enjoy here, as pledges of our being one day what he now is. He is more than conqueror, ſo ſhall we be through him that loveth us. As our faith increaſes we ſhall ſhare more with him, and triumph more over the ſmiles and the frowns of the world.

Since this is the only way to conquer the world, art thou, O my ſoul, conquering it in this

this way, and haſt thou faith in the victory of Jeſus? Doſt thou depend on him for the pardon of thy former love of the world, and for the crucifying the love of it in thy heart? Art thou relying upon his victorious grace to make thee a daily conqueror over all its temptations? Examine thy warfare, and ſee whether it be carried on according to the ſcripture rule, and with the promiſed ſucceſs. Look at ſome of the Lord's champions. Survey the triumphs of Moſes, and remember the Lord's hand is not ſhortened---"BY FAITH Moſes when he was "come to years refuſed to be called the ſon of "Pharoah's daughter, chooſing rather to ſuffer "affliction with the people of God, than to en- "joy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, eſteeming "the reproach of Chriſt greater riches than the "treaſures of Egypt: for he had reſpect unto "the recompence of the reward." How great was this faith! how glorious its victories! It was a divine grace, and exerciſed by a divine operation---mighty through God. By it Moſes ſaw the reality of heavenly things: by it he taſted their ſweetneſs, enjoyed their bleſſedneſs, and had a hope full of glory and immortality. The world made him its higheſt offers, but he rejected them. His eye was kept ſingle, his heart chaſte towards his God. The honor of Pharaoh's alliance he deſpiſed. He preferred affliction with the people of God to the pleaſures of ſin. He embraced

reproach, when it came on him for following Chriſt, and he eſteemed it beyond all the treaſures of Egypt. He ſaw the vanity and emptineſs of earthly enjoyments, and he trampled upon them, having reſpect to the recompence of reward. Thus he was crucified to the world. What an exalted character! There is no ſuch hero in the records of prophane hiſtory, but thank God there are great numbers in ſacred, who followed the ſteps of his faith. Every ſoldier of Chriſt Jeſus is called to war againſt the world, and every good ſoldier is a daily conqueror. The world is always preſent, and has its temptations ready to ſtop him, but he meets them ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, truſting to the whole armor of God. Then victory is certain. And in order that the Lord may have all the glory, he will keep him fighting and praying in this manner--

This world is not my portion. My happineſs does not conſiſt in loving and enjoying the things of it. It is an evil world--it lieth in wickedneſs --Satan has his ſeat and throne in it--and it is condemned to fire. Thank God, mine eyes are open to ſee a better world than this, and I am travelling to it. I believe it was the purpoſe and will of the eternal Three to chooſe me to be an heir of the world to come. Glory be to the Father for his free choice, and for all the bleſſings of his love. Glory be to the co-equal Son,

for

for his complete and everlaſtingly perfect ſalvation. Glory be to the eternal Spirit, to whom I am indebted, for what I believe of the Son's ſalvation, and for what I have experienced of the Father's love. On thee, O God the Holy Ghoſt, I place my dependence for carrying on the work which thou haſt begun. I would be guided by thy counſel every ſtep of my walk; and ſtrengthened by thee for every part of my warfare. Keep me in the right way, and make me conqueror over all the enemies who would ſtop me in it, or turn me out of it; eſpecially deliver me from this preſent evil world. While I am going through it to a better, preſerve my heart from the love of it. O my God, give me a ſtranger's temper, and a pilgrim's frame. Let me live as a ſojourner here below, that the good things I meet with on my journey may not tempt me to make this my reſt, and the evil things I meet with may not lead me to fret and murmur, as if God was not my Father, and his heaven my home. O thou divine teacher, ſhew me daily the glory of my Saviour's victory over the world, that I may ſhare with him in it; and enable me to go forth conquering and to conquer in his ſtrength, and to his praiſe. Help me to look upon the world, and to treat it, as he did, that feeling the emptineſs of its offered happineſs, I may with a ſingle heart cleave to my Father in Jeſus, and may be ſaved from the ſpirit

of

of the world. Keep me waiting for my appointed time, ſitting quite looſe and free to the things about me--And let heavenly and eternal things be always preſent to my faith, in their reality and bleſſedneſs, that I may grow more alive to them, and more dead to every thing elſe. Preſerve my heart, O my gracious God, that it may be ſimple with thee, when I am in my worldly buſineſs. Enable me to caſt all my cares and burdens on thee, believing thou careſt for me. O daily crucify the world to me, and me to it, that when its offers ſtand in competition with thy love, I may have grace to reject them. In this holy war carry me on glorifying him who hath called me to be a ſoldier. Grant me this for Jeſus ſake, *Amen*, and *Amen*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

The believer marches on reſiſting and overcoming the wiles and the aſſaults of the tempter.

SATAN is a continual adverſary. He rebelled againſt the ſovereign will of the moſt high in heaven, and was caſt out. As ſoon as man was formed, he began to tempt him to rebel againſt God, and he ſucceeded. Ever ſince the revelation was made of the divine purpoſe to redeem ſinners, he has ſet himſelf up againſt it, and with impotent rage oppoſed it. He is always trying to hinder ſinners from coming to the Saviour, and when they are come to him, to hinder them from living by faith upon his fulneſs. On the ſide of ſatan are principalities and powers, combined armies and united legions of apoſtate ſpirits---formidable to man for their number---more ſo for their ſubtlety and cunning---they have ſtratagems and wiles, depths of ſkill to deceive ---in which they are ſo ſucceſsful that they have deceived the whole world. Their courage is deſperate. They fear nothing: for they were mad enough to take up arms againſt the Almighty. No wonder then that they ſhould be unwearied in their attacks againſt man. They

are

are always upon the watch---ready as one temptation fails to preſent another. Their ſtrength is very great---they are called principalities and powers--rulers and princes--yea the god of this world: becauſe they work, as they pleaſe, in the children of diſobedience; whom they keep ſo faſt bound in the chains of ſin, that no human arm can break them aſunder. And it is the only joy they know--the joy of hell---to rivet the chains of ſin upon thoſe poor captives, till they bind them in everlaſting chains of darkneſs.

Theſe, O my ſoul, are thine enemies. They had drawn thee into their rebellion, and they are ſtill trying to draw thee into their torments. They have free acceſs to thy fallen nature. They know how to make uſe of the objects in the world to work upon thy ſenſes, and to ſtir up evil thoughts. They have fiery darts always at hand to throw at thy faith, and reſt not night and day in attacking thy peace and happineſs in Jeſus.

Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and all that is within me bleſs his holy name for undertaking to ſave thee from thoſe enemies. The love of the Father gave his Son to be the woman's ſeed---Jehovah incarnate---for his people. In their nature he was to bruiſe the head of the ſerpent: his cunning, his poiſon, and all his power to hurt, lie in his head: when this is bruiſed, he is defeated. The battle to be fought was foretold,

and

and the victory to be won was promiſed to Adam; and by faith in it, he and all the redeemed in the Old Teſtament conquered ſatan. In the fulneſs of time God was manifeſt in the fleſh: he came to deſtroy the works of the devil. Sin is his great work; by it he drew man from God, and by it he keeps man from God. Immanuel begun the deſtruction of the works of the devil by taking human nature. His manhood was perfectly holy---it had not, it could not have, any ſin: becauſe God was in Chriſt.

There was every thing in his holy life, which the law could require. He obeyed all its precepts with uninterrupted conformity, and being co-equal and co-eternal with the Father his obedience was therefore divine, abſolutely complete, and infinitely ſufficient to juſtify for ever. He was tempted indeed, but he overcame every temptation. He defeated ſatan in all his attempts, inſomuch that when he was entering upon the laſt ſcene of his life, he could declare —"The prince of this world cometh, AND "HATH NOTHING IN ME." He did come, and the great pitched battle was fought which was to decide for ever, Whether the ſeed of the woman, or the ſerpent ſhould be crowned conqueror. The battle began in the garden of Gethſemane, and was finiſhed upon mount Calvary. Every ſtratagem of infernal policy was then

then tried: every aſſault of deviliſh malice was exerted againſt the Captain of our ſalvation: but he conquered them all, as it was foretold--"Thou "ſhalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young "lion and the dragon ſhalt thou trample under "thy feet." He trod upon the ſerpent's head, and cruſhed it, but at the ſame time the ſerpent bit his heel. The heel is his loweſt part, his body --this fell in the conflict, but he completed his victory by the loſs of his life. The apoſtle ſpeaks of the croſs, upon which he bled and died, as the great ſcene of this engagement, and on which he vanquiſhed and triumphed for ever over the powers of hell--having ſpoiled principalities and powers, and taken away all their armor wherein they truſted, he made a ſhew of them openly triumphing over them upon the croſs, leading them as you would captives in chains; rebels ſtill, but unable to rob the Lord Chriſt of the glory of any part of his conqueſt: Thus through death he conquered death, and him that had the power of death, that is the devil. O bleſſed and almighty Jeſus, eternal thanks are due to thee for this moſt glorious victory. Satan is now a vanquiſhed foe. He is under thy feet, thou high exalted head of the redeemed. Thou haſt for them, and in their ſtead overcome all his wiles and aſſaults. He may tempt, but he cannot conquer them. He has

has no right to accuſe them—thou haſt made an end of ſin. He has no power to torment them —thou haſt brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs. He cannot pluck them out of thy hands—they are dear to thee, and kept as the apple of thine eye. Glory be to thee, thou wilt ſoon bring them out of the reach of his temptations, and thou wilt be to them an eternal and infinitely perfect Saviour.

In this faith, O my ſoul, thou art called upon to take up arms againſt the old ſerpent. Thou art to fight againſt him under the banner of JESUS —a name terrible to the devil and his angels. Truſting to the victory of Jeſus for thee, and to the ſtrength of Jeſus working in thee, thou art daily to bring him honor and renown. How ſafe, how bleſſed is ſuch a warfare! Thou haſt the wiſdom of thy God and Saviour to diſcover to thee the wiles of Satan. Truſt to it, O my ſoul. Leave thyſelf ſimply to his direction; and although Satan be ſubtle and cunning—although he has depths of policy, and plans out of number, yet thou ſhalt not be ignorant of his devices. Thy all-knowing Saviour will detect his plots, and turn the counſel of that Ahitophel into folly. And if he attack thee as a roaring lion, yet fear him not. Thy Redeemer is ſtrong. He has bruiſed the ſerpent's head; reſiſt him in faith, and thou ſhalt bruiſe it alſo. Lean on the arm of thy Jeſus: Depend on his promiſed ſtrength:

Follow

Follow his orders, and thou ſhalt tread Satan under thy feet daily.

But above all remember, that thou canſt only conquer him by faith--by faith in the victory of Jeſus, built upon thy faith in the word of Jeſus: For thus the ſcripture teſtifies of the conquerors now round the throne, "that they overcame the devil "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word "of their teſtimony"--they overcame him by depending upon the atoning blood, and by truſting to what the word ſays of its all-ſufficiency to ſave; and they found by experience the promiſed victory. To the ſame effect the apoſtle Peter ſtirs up believers to a ſobriety in the uſe of all creature comforts, and to a continual watchfulneſs againſt their enemies, in order that they might daily conquer--"Be ſober, be vigilant, "becauſe your adverſary the devil, as a roaring "lion, walketh about, ſeeking who he may de-"vour: whom reſiſt STEDFAST IN THE FAITH." This brings victory. The believer reſiſts the devil, and ſtands againſt him ſtedfaſtly in the power of Chriſt. This power is almighty, and therefore faith relying upon it infallibly ſecures victory. The devil may throw his fiery darts thick and faſt, but the ſhield of faith is proof againſt them. It is able through God to quench them; ſo that the fire of temptation ſhall not inflame the ſoul. How precious are theſe ſcriptures! How encouraging to the Chriſtian ſoldier!

they

they promiſe him every thing needful for the battle, and for victory. Why then ſhouldſt thou doubt, O my ſoul, of the promiſed bleſſings? Take courage. Fight under the banner of Jeſus. Keep cloſe to his colours. Follow ſtrictly his orders: And he will keep Satan under thy feet to day, and thou ſhalt be more than conqueror over him for ever.

Conſidering thy war with Satan in this light, what is there in it, O my ſoul, to ſtop thee in thy way to heaven? Thou art called upon to fight againſt him, but then it is in the Lord's ſtrength, and as a partaker of his conqueſt. He made all thine enemies his. He fought thy battles. His triumph is thine. Thou mayeſt therefore ſing of victory before every battle. Thou doſt not fight to gain the pardon of thy ſins, or to make thyſelf righteous; but to oppoſe thine adverſary, who would draw thee into ſin, and if he could, would rob thee of thy righteouſneſs. He hates thee, becauſe Chriſt loves thee. But his hatred is in vain. Thy Saviour has conquered him for thee, and by faith will conquer him in thee: For thou art kept by his almighty power. Truſting to this, go forth ſtrong in the Lord. While thou art living in communion with him, thy warfare will be ſucceſsful. If thou attend to his word, and follow his orders, he will encourage thy heart, and ſtrengthen thy hands with ſuch promiſes as theſe--

I have chosen thee to be a soldier, and I send thee out to fight against all the enemies of thy peace. But thou dost not go to this warfare at thine own charges, nor carry it on doubtful of victory. I have provided every thing needful for maintaining the battle, and for bringing thee off conqueror. Thou shalt find much profit in this holy war. It will be the means of keeping up constant fellowship with me. Thou shalt see thy need of coming to me for courage, for orders, for strength; and by faith thou wilt receive sensible experience of my being present with thee, and on thy side. Only trust me, and thou shalt find me faithful to my promise of help and victory. Go forth then to thy daily warfare, and boldly face Satan. Fear him not in the least: for that would betray a doubt of my having him under my feet, or of my putting him under thine. Give not place to him; no, not for a moment: but resist him, and continue to resist him, stedfast in faith and prayer--trusting to my promise and depending on mine arm. Be sober, be vigilant. Thus oppose the devil, and thou wilt certainly conquer him. And having conquered, fight on. In the fight look to me for victory, having obtained it, expect a fresh battle, and look still to me for victory: And thus go on conquering and to conquer. Thy crown is in my keeping. As sure as I have it on my head, it shall be on thine. Thou shalt soon sit down with

with me on my throne a crowned conqueror for evermore.

Glory be to thee, my precious Jesus, for these faithful promises, in which thou hast caused me to put my trust. And now, Lord, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant be established, and do as thou hast said. Thou hast put it into my heart to desire to be a good soldier, and to fight thy battles against all the enemies of thy crown and dignity. O thou glorious Captain of my salvation, arm me for my daily warfare with satan. He is too cunning for me; O my God, teach me his devices. He is too mighty for me, but the seed of the woman hath bruised his head; yes, almighty Jesus, thou hast destroyed the devil and his works. I believe in thy victory. O let me partake of its fruits, and daily bring thee honor and renown by my victories. Make me strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, that I may not fear satan: Send me out against him armed with thine invincible armor. Strengthen me, O my God, that I faint not through the length or sharpness of the battle, but enable me to persevere, till thou discharge me from the war. Thus in a constant dependence upon thee would I fight the good fight of faith, keeping up communion with thee in every battle, and growing more acquainted with my wants, and more thankful for every

fupply. O my loving Jeſus, increaſe my fellowſhip with thee. I deſire to war a good warfare, and every thing needful for it is from thee. From thy fulneſs I expect it, and when I receive it, I would uſe it to thy glory. Hear, Lord, and anſwer me for thy mercies ſake. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

The believer kept by the power of God perſeveres in his holy walk, and victorious warfare.

AFTER the believer has made a great progreſs in his walk, and has been very ſucceſsful in his warfare, yet he is not out of the reach of any temptation. He is ſtill liable to be ſtopped in the way of duty. His enemies may cheat him by ſome ſtratagem, or gain ſome advantage over him by open force. While he is attending to theſe things, as they come before him in his daily experience, a thought will often ariſe—

I am afraid my profeſſion will at laſt come to nothing, and I ſhall be a caſt-away. I feel ſo much corruption working in my duties, and my heart is ſo ready to revolt and to turn from the Lord in every battle, that I cannot help being uneaſy about my final ſtate. How can I, it is not in me to hold out and perſevere againſt ſo much oppoſition from within and without? What ſignifies my reſolution to walk forward, or to fight for an uncertain crown? I think I gain no ground. Mine own carnal will plagues me, and I love eaſe and quiet, as much as ever. My corruptions ſeem as many, and mine enemies as ſtrong as they were: One day, I fear, I ſhall periſh

periſh by their hands. My heart faints at the thought. My courage fails me. O wretched man that I am, Where, to whom ſhall I look for ſtrength to enable me to hold out unto the end?

No believer is abſolutely free from ſuch an attack; and there are ſeaſons very favourable to it. If his mind be in heavineſs through manifold temptations, and be reaſoning legally upon them. If he be under the hidings of the Lord's countenance, or in a time of deſertion. If he be fallen into any great ſin, perhaps his old beſetting ſin; if the guilt of it be upon his conſcience, and the indignation of God be heavy upon him: Then ſuch thoughts find eaſy admittance; and if they be indulged, they greatly diſtreſs the believer: for they directly aſſault his faith, and ſtrike at the very being of his hope. As theſe graces are weakened, he moves ſlowly; and if unbelief prevail, there is a ſtop put to his progreſs in the heavenly road.

Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, who has made ample proviſion for victory over this temptation. The principles before inſiſted on are now to be brought into practice. Here is a freſh occaſion to try their power and influence, and to make it appear, that in theſe diſtreſſing circumſtances the Father has given his children good ground to rely upon his unchangeable love. He has revealed to them the immutability of his counſel and of his oath, that when they have

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fled to Jeſus for refuge, they may comfort their hearts and ſay—I have been afraid of falling away, but it is without reaſon: for I have ſtill immutable things to truſt in--although to my ſenſe and feeling every thing ſeems to make againſt me, yet God has promiſed not to leave me nor forſake me. O that I may honor his promiſe, and without doubting rely upon his faithful arm to make it good.

Conſider then, O my ſoul, the principles of the doctrine of Chriſt. Review them carefully. Thou ſeeſt what influence they have upon every ſtep of thy walk, and how mighty they are through God to carry thee through all thy difficulties. O ſtudy then the perfect freeneſs and the abſolute ſufficiency of the ſalvation of Jeſus. Read and mark the bonds and ſecurities, which a faithful God has given thee to truſt in, and not to be afraid. The time to honor them moſt is to believe them, when thou haſt the leaſt ſenſible evidence: for that is the ſtrongeſt faith. If thou canſt believe upon his bare word, and it is a very good warrant, thy feet ſhall ſtand firm upon the rock, and thy goings ſhall be well ordered: and that thou mayeſt believe this in the hardeſt trials God informs thee, that thy continuance in grace does not depend on thyſelf. "Thou "ſtandeſt by faith": and faith ſhould direct thee to what God has undertaken and has promiſed to do for thee. He would have thee to place

place the confidence of thy heart upon his tried word, which is a never failing foundation, and if thou waſt to build all thy hopes of perſevering upon it, it would quiet thy fears and comfort thy heart. Thou wouldſt then ſee that God has not left thee to thyſelf to ſtand or fall, but has engaged never to leave thee nor forſake thee. He has declared, he will not turn away from thee to do thee good, and he will put his fear into thy heart, and thou ſhalt not turn away from him. View thy caſe in this comfortable light, and while thou art conſidering the ſafety of thy perſevering, as revealed in ſcripture for the ground of thy faith, may every promiſe lead thee to truſt more in God, and to truſt leſs to thyſelf, and then the ſnare which was laid for thee will be broken, and thou wilt be delivered.

But take heed of carrying thine opinions to ſcripture, and of forcing it to ſpeak for them. Beware of that common miſtake: and beware of human ſyſtems. Pay no regard to men or names. Simply attend to the promiſes of God concerning thy perſevering. Thy preſent trial has convinced thee, that thou canſt not depend on thy own faithfulneſs: this therefore is the time to learn practically the faithfulneſs of God, and to improve thy faith in it from ſuch ſcripture arguments, as theſe.

Firſt the nature of the divine covenant, which is not only the unchangeable will of the eternal Three,

Three, but is alſo their agreement confirmed by oath concerning the heirs of promiſe.

The father loved them as his children, freely, with an everlaſting love: he choſe them, and gave them to his Son: he engaged to keep them by his power through faith unto ſalvation.

The Son accepted them, and wrote all their names in his book (not one of them therefore can be loſt) he undertook to be made man, and to live and die for them; to riſe from the dead, to aſcend, and to intercede for them: and he ſitteth as king mediator upon the throne, till every one of them be brought to glory.

The holy Spirit covenanted to carry into execution the purpoſes of the Father's love, and to apply the bleſſings of the Son's ſalvation. He undertook to quicken the heirs of promiſe, to call them effectually, to guide, to ſtrengthen, to ſanctify, and to comfort them; yea he is not to leave them, till the number of the elect be perfected. Therefore HE ABIDES WITH THEM FOR EVER.

In this covenant the eternal Three have undertaken for every heir of promiſe---to do all *for* him, and all *in* him---for the means, and for the end---ſo that not one of them can periſh: for faithfulneſs to the covenant is one of the higheſt honors of the Godhead: "I am Jehovah your "Alehim, which KEEPETH covenant, I will "EVER BE MINDFUL of my covenant---My co-

" covenant WILL I NOT BREAK, nor alter the " thing that is gone out of my mouth." What ſtrong conſolation is there in theſe words! Study them, O my ſoul, that by them thy faith may be eſtabliſhed, and they may do thee good, like a medicine.

Thou art afraid of falling away; but the bleſſed Trinity have undertaken to hold thee up, and their covenant engagements are to be the ground of thy believing, that they will fulfill what they have promiſed. Obſerve and adore the goodneſs of God; ſee, how he meets thy doubts and anſwers thine objections---" An oath for confir- " mation is among men an end of all ſtrife: " wherein God willing more abundantly to ſhew " to the heirs of promiſe the immutability of " his counſel confirmed it by an oath: that by " two immutable things, in which it was impoſ- " ſible for God to lie, we might have a ſtrong " conſolation, who have fled for refuge" to Jeſus. Thy faith ſhould run parallel with this promiſe, and ſhould ſafely truſt as far as it warrants thee: now it gives thee ſufficient reaſon to conclude, that thy ſtate before God is immutable, and that he has determined thou ſhalt not fall away and periſh: For obſerve

Secondly, His deſign in the covenant. He knew thy frame, thine infirmities, and thy temptations, and therefore he provided the covenant, and promiſed the bleſſings of it upon oath, *for*

thy

thy ſake--to end ALL ſtrife in thy conſcience--and to give thee ſtrong conſolation. This was his mind and will. He revealed it for thee, to ſettle thy heart in believing, and to adminiſter to thee great comfort. Weigh attentively each of theſe particulars, and then ſay, what more could have been done to ſatisfy thee of thine immutable perſevering.

" But thou thinkeſt, " Such trials as thine are " uncommon, and perhaps not provided for in " the covenant, and therefore it can be no diſ- " paragement to the divine faithfulneſs if thou " ſhouldſt fall away." How can this be, ſince the everlaſting covenant is ORDERED IN ALL THINGS, and on the part of God is abſolutely SURE---nothing that concerns thee is left out of it---not a ſingle hair of thy head---thy trials are all appointed and ordered, and the end alſo which they are to anſwer.

Perhaps from the clear evidence of the divine record thou art convinced of the covenant of God to ſave the heirs of promiſe, and of his engaging to keep them that they ſhall never periſh, but thou art afraid thou art not in the covenant, nor an heir of promiſe. From whence ariſe thy fears? From ſcripture? No. All ſcripture is on thy ſide. Haſt thou not fled, as a poor ſinner, to Jeſus for refuge? Haſt thou not acknowledged his divine nature, and his all-ſufficient work? And though thou art now tempted to doubt, yet

ſome faith is ſtill fighting againſt unbelief? Theſe are covenant bleſſings. O look up then to Jeſus ---why not THY Jeſus? But however look to him ---keep looking on---and he will give thee reaſon to be aſhamed of thy doubts and fears.

But the Lord hides himſelf from me, and therefore I fear I am not in his favor. This objection is anſwered in the charter of grace---I WILL NOT TURN AWAY FROM DOING THEE GOOD. He has hid his face, and thou art troubled: this trouble is for good. It ſhould put thee upon inquiring into the reaſon of God's hiding himſelf. It ſhould humble thee, and ſhould exerciſe thy faith upon ſuch a ſcripture as this---" For the " iniquity of his covetouſneſs was I wroth and " ſmote him, I hid me, and was wroth, and he " went on frowardly in the way of his heart: I " have ſeen his ways and will heal him, I will " lead him alſo and will reſtore comforts to him " and to his mourners." Although he hid himſelf, yet he had love to his people---although he ſmote them, yet it was a fatherly correction. But

Thou feareſt, God not only hides his face, but has alſo quite forſaken thee: He may, as to thy ſenſe and feeling, but not as to his own purpoſe, which changeth not. Hear how he ſpeaks to thee, and ſilences thy doubts---" For a ſmall mo- " ment have I forſaken thee, but with great " mercies will I gather thee: in a little wrath I

" hid

" hid my face from thee for a moment, but with " everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy on thee, " ſaith the Lord thy Redeemer." How gracious is thy God! What infinite mercy is it, that he ſhould give thee ſuch promiſes, ſo ſuited to the trials of thy faith, to preſerve thee under them, and to bring thee out of them! Read carefully, over and over again, theſe promiſes: and may every reading of them diſperſe the cloud of unbelief, until thy ſoul be enlivened with the light of the Lord's loving countenance.

But perhaps thou art in a worſe caſe, as to thine own apprehenſion: " Thou thinkeſt God is incenſed againſt me, and juſtly---he has caſt me off, and I can expect no more favor at his hand: once indeed I thought he loved me, but I have fallen into a great ſin—an old, beſetting ſin---my conſcience accuſes me of committing it againſt light and conviction---it is a foul black ſpot, ſuch as is not to be found upon the children of God."

Thou art fallen: And wilt thou lie there, and not be raiſed up again? Thou art under guilt: And wilt thou nurſe it, and add ſin to ſin? Aggravate the ſinfulneſs of thy fall, as much as thou wilt, yet thou canſt not be truly humbled for it, but by returning to God, and by truſting in the plenteous redemption, that is in Chriſt Jeſus. Then thy heart will be ſoftened and melted into love, for grace will have its due honor, and thou wilt

wilt ſee what the ſcripture ſays of thy caſe in its divine truth and majeſty. Thou wilt feel thyſelf exactly what the word of God ſays of thee---a fallen ſinful creature---in thee (that is in thy fleſh) dwelleth no good thing---ſo that there is not any ſin, but thou art capable of falling into it through the ſtrength of temptation. So long as thou art in the body, the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh; in this conflict thou mayeſt fall, but the covenant ſecures thee from periſhing. Abraham the father of the faithful fell---the friend of God fell into the ſame ſin again and again. Moſes fell: ſo did David. Peter forewarned fell: ſo did all the apoſtles. Yet they were believers, and they did recover themſelves out of the ſnare of the devil: For whatever ſin thou art fallen into may be pardoned, as theirs was. "The blood of Jeſus Chriſt "cleanſeth from all ſin"---there is in it an infinite virtue to waſh away every ſpot and ſtain---it is a public fountain---it ſtands open for daily uſe, that believers may waſh and be clean---it is always, at every given moment effectual---it CLEANSETH, in the preſent tenſe, now---to-day, while it is called to-day: For there is nothing new to be ſuffered on the part of Chriſt, in order to take away ſin. He put it away by the ſacrifice of himſelf: The Father accepted it; and thus proclaims the free forgiveneſs of all the treſpaſſes, for which the atonement was made---"I will be merciful to

"their

" their unrighteouſneſs, and their ſins and their " iniquities will I remember no more." Why doſt thou reject the comfort of this promiſe? It is ſuited to thy preſent diſtreſs, and is the remedy for it. Thou art fallen into unrighteouſneſs —God ſays, I will be merciful to it. Thou art fallen into ſins and iniquities--he ſays, I will remember them no more. Thou mayeſt remember thy fall, but let it be in order to riſe from it by faith. It ſhould teach thee thy need of the blood of the Lamb. It ſhould bring thee to ſprinkle it afreſh upon thy conſcience, and to live ſafe and happy under the protection of it. Thus apply it to thy fall and thou wilt repent aright; thou wilt be truly humbled and made more watchful. Thou wilt live more by faith in thy covenant God, wilt glorify more the infinitely perfect ſalvation of Jeſus, and wilt be more dependent upon the grace and keeping of the eternal Spirit.

Conſider then, O my ſoul, the rich, abounding, ſuper-abounding grace of thy God in making ſuch a proviſion for raiſing thee up, when fallen into ſin. He intended the promiſes in the covenant ſhould be the means of thy recovery, as they give thee good ground ſtill to truſt in a covenant God, and in his immutable counſel and oath. O lie not then in guilt. Reſt not in unbelief. Give not place to the devil. The Lord has put words into thy mouth, may he help thee in the faith of thy heart

heart to take them up, and ſay--" Rejoice not " againſt me, O mine enemy, when I fall, I ſhall " ariſe; when I ſit in darkneſs, the Lord ſhall " be a light unto me: I will bear the indigna- " tion of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned " againſt him, until he plead my cauſe, and exe- " cute judgment for me; he will bring me " forth to the light, and I ſhall behold his righ- " teouſneſs." If the Lord open to thee the rich treaſury of grace in this ſcripture, and enable thee to depend on the ample ſecurity here given for raiſing thee from thy fall, then conſider in the

Third place, the expreſs promiſes made in the covenant, that the believer ſhall not periſh, but ſhall have everlaſting life. Theſe promiſes are not conditional, made to the believer upon certain terms, as if upon doing his part God would do his alſo: for he does not ſtand by his own will, or ſtrength, or faithfulneſs---he does not hold out to the end by his own diligence and watchfulneſs in means---or receive the crown of glory as the merited reward of any works of righteouſneſs done by him. The promiſes are all of free grace, not dependent on man's will, but on God's; not yea and nay, but of abſolutely certain fulfillment. They were all made in the covenant to Chriſt the head, and are already made good to Chriſt, as the head, for the uſe of his members—" For ALL the promiſes of God " are

" are in him, yea, and in him, *Amen.*" He was given for the covenant of his people, and as ſuch, he undertook to do all their works for them, and in them, and therefore all the promiſed bleſſings of the covenant are laid up in his fulneſs—" in " him they are yea"---and laid up, as the head has the fulneſs of the ſenſes for the uſe of his members---" in him they are, *Amen.*" He communicates the promiſed bleſſings freely, not conditionally; by believing, and not for working: " Therefore (ſays the apoſtle, ſpeaking of Chriſt's " righteouſneſs) it is of faith, that it might be by " grace, to the end the promiſe might be ſure " to all the ſeed."

In this ſovereign manner and ſtyle runs the covenant, and every promiſe in it---I WILL BE THEIR GOD, of mine own mere motion and grace, and according to the good pleaſure of mine own will---AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE---my will ſhall make them willing in the day of my power: for I will work in them both to will and to do: yea, *I will be* a Father unto them and *they ſhall be* my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord almighty. The word FATHER relates to his children, and expreſſes the unchangeable love of his heart towards them: it is a dear covenant name, and denotes the inſeparable connection between him and his children: whenever they hear it, it ſhould always excite in them an idea of his everlaſting affection. He

loves his family as a Father, and loves every one of them with the same almighty love. He cannot change. He cannot cease to be a Father, and they cannot cease to be his children. His name is a security to them, that they cannot perish: for if one of them could, they all might. And then his covenant purpose to bring many sons unto glory would be defeated---his relation to them as their Father would be broken---he would be a Father without children---he would deny them the promised blessings---he would forget to be gracious to them---his will concerning them would change or would be over-ruled by some opposite will---and his great plan in the covenant would come to nothing. But these things cannot possibly be. He is the Father of his children, and he has engaged, by promise and oath, to love, to bless, and to keep them for ever. Out of perfect love he gave them to his Son, who undertook to be their Saviour: he came and was made man, Jehovah incarnate, to live and die for them. He was so delighted with them (for he has all their names written in his book) and with the work, that he was straitened till it was accomplished. Blessings on him for ever, it is finished. The royal Saviour is upon the throne, almighty to save his dear redeemed. He would lose his name, which is above every name, the honors of his salvation would fade away upon his head, and the glories of his offices

fices would come to nothing, if one whom Jeſus lived and died to ſave ſhould periſh. But it is not poſſible. Whom he loves, he loves unto the end. " I give unto them, ſays he, eternal " life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall " any pluck them out of my hand." They are his ſeed--and it was covenanted, that he ſhould ſee his ſeed. They are the travail of his ſoul--and he ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied. How can he be ſatisfied, if any one of them ſhould be loſt? He prayed--" Holy Father, keep through thine own name, " thoſe whom thou haſt given me, that they may " be one, as we are one." And the Father always heard him. He prayed, that they might be with him, where he is, to ſee his glory: and the holy Spirit covenanted to bring them to it--he undertook as his name *Spirit* imports, to breathe life into them, to call, to convert them, to keep them, and to give them every thing needful for their ſpiritual life. How can they fail of coming to glory, being thus kept for it by the power of God? The holy Spirit would loſe his name *Spirit* or breath of life, and his office, which is to abide with, and to dwell for ever in the elect people of God, if any one of them ſhould die from God, and periſh. Thus there is full ſecurity given by the names and offices of the Trinity, that believers ſhall be kept from falling away. The Father cannot be without his

children. The glory of Jeſus would fade away, if one of his redeemed was plucked out of his hand. The divine honors of the Spirit of life would be eclipſed, if he was to forſake his charge, and to ſuffer any of the redeemed to fall into hell. But theſe things cannot be. The will of the Father, Son, and Spirit, is the ſame concerning the ſalvation of the elect, which is as ſecure as covenant-bonds and oaths can make it.

Art thou then, O my ſoul, eſtabliſhed in this great truth? Doſt thou yield to the power of the evidence which the bleſſed Trinity have vouchſafed to give thee? Meditate carefully upon it for the growth of thy faith. Search the ſcriptures, and obſerve how clearly God declares his fixed purpoſe to keep his people, and to hold them up unto the end. The great preacher of the goſpel in the Old Teſtament church ſpeaks thus of the unchangeable will of a covenant God --" The mountains ſhall depart, and the hills be " removed, but my kindneſs ſhall not depart " from thee, neither ſhall the covenant of my " peace be removed, ſaith the Lord that hath " mercy on thee." A great preacher in the New Teſtament church has confirmed the ſame precious truth. He is treating of the golden chain of ſalvation, and ſhewing how inſeparable every link of it is, and in this proſpect he triumphs---" Who ſhall lay any thing to the " charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth,

" who

" who is he that condemneth! It is Chriſt that " died, yea rather that is riſen again, who is " even at the right hand of God, who alſo " maketh interceſſion for us. Who ſhall ſepa- " rate us from the love of Chriſt? Shall tribula- " tion, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or " nakedneſs, or ſword? Nay, in all theſe things " we are more than conquerors through him that " loveth us. By the mouth of theſe two infal- lible witneſſes the truth is eſtabliſhed--they de- poſe, that the covenant is immutable, and that nothing can ſeparate believers from the love, wherewith God loves them in his Son. O moſt comfortable doctrine! How encouraging is it in any undertaking to ſet about it with certain hope of ſucceſs. How animating in our Chriſtian walk, how reviving in the dark and difficult paths of it, to have God's promiſe, that he will keep us, and bring us to an happy end! How pleaſing is it to go on by faith in our warfare, caſting all our care upon him, who careth for us! How delightful is it to truſt his promiſe, and daily to find it made good---" Ye are kept by the " power of God through faith unto eternal ſal- " vation." Here, O my ſoul, thou art to ſeek for ſtrong conſolation amidſt the trials and diffi- culties of thy walk. Thou art afraid of falling --God has engaged to hold thee up. Thou haſt been tempted to think thou ſhouldſt fall quite away, and come to nothing---but God ſays, thou

art

art PRESERVED in Chriſt Jeſus---His covenant and oath are made to confirm the faith of thy perſevering. Thou ſtandeſt by faith, and thy faith ſhould lead thee to reſt ſafely on what God ſays about thy ſtanding: And for thy faith itſelf, its continuing, its increaſing, thou haſt his infallible faithfulneſs to depend upon. Thou art weak ---but he keeps thee by his power, Thine enemies are ſtrong--but none of them ſhall pluck thee out of his hand. Thou art willing to join them, and to depart from the living God---but he has promiſed to put his fear into thy heart. and thou ſhalt not depart from him. He meets with thy doubts, and anſwers all thine objections in a word---For he hath ſaid, I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE, NOR FORSAKE THEE.

Be of good courage then, O my ſoul, and go forward, ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and he will bring thee ſafe to the end of thy journey. He has promiſed it. Put thyſelf into his hands, and give him the glory of keeping thee. He will hold up thy goings in his paths, that thy footſteps ſlip not. The Lord ſhall preſerve thee from all evil. The Lord ſhall preſerve thy going out, and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore. How then canſt thou miſcarry, ſafe under his guidance and keeping? Commit thy ways unto the Lord. Do it ſimply. Look up by faith to his promiſe, and then lean on his arm. Thus going on thou

mayeſt

mayeſt rejoice at every ſtep in the Lord thy God. He has left thee a ſweet hymn upon the ſubject; with which the weary travellers to Sion have often refreſhed their ſpirits. Take it up, and ſing it after them. Study it. Mix faith with it: And with perfect reliance on what God, who cannot lie, has promiſed in it to do for thee, ſing and make melody with it in thy heart unto the Lord--

" In that day ſing ye unto her, A vineyard of " red wine: I the Lord do keep it: I will water " it every moment: Leſt any hurt it, I will keep " it night and day: Fury is not in me: Who " would ſet the briers and thorns againſt me in " battle? I would go through them, I would " burn them together. Or will he take hold of " my ſtrength, that he may make peace with " me, then he ſhall make peace with me. He " ſhall cauſe them that come of Jacob to take " root: Iſrael ſhall bloſſom and bud, and ſhall " fill the face of the world with fruit."

O my good God and faithful keeper, I do believe theſe precious promiſes; help mine unbelief. Forgive my diſtruſting thy faithfulneſs, and enable me ſtedfaſtly to rely upon it for the future. What return can I make unto thee for grafting me into the true vine! O Lord this love ſurpaſſeth knowledge. I was fit for nothing but the fire, and thou haſt brought me into the vineyard of red wine, and haſt enabled me to truſt in that

that blood of the Lamb, which cheereth God and man. On this my ſoul lives, and is refreſhed. And being through grace *in* him, and living *upon* him, I bleſs thee, holy Father, for thy faithful promiſe to keep me unto the end. I am ſtill an eaſy prey to all thoſe who ſeek the hurt of my ſoul; but thou haſt given me thy word, that leſt any hurt me, thou wilt keep me night and day. I confeſs, gracious God, that I have diſhonored thee by doubting of thy love, and by queſtioning its unchangeableneſs, but now I believe that fury is not in thee to any one branch in the true vine. There is love, and nothing but love in all thy dealings with Chriſt, and with his. Forgive my guilty fears, and ſuſpicions of thy forſaking me, ariſing from my weakneſs and from the ſtrength of mine enemies: I now ſee that thou canſt as eaſily conſume them, as fire can briers and thorns. Lord increaſe my faith in thy promiſed ſtrength, that I may lay hold of it for peace, and may keep faſt hold of it for maintaining peace with thee always and by all means. O grant me this my good God, that my faith may work more by love. Let me take deeper root in Jeſus, and grow up more into him, bloſſoming and budding and flouriſhing in his vineyard. I depend upon thee to keep me a branch in him, and to make me a fruitful branch, bringing forth plentifully the fruits of righteouſneſs which are by Chriſt Jeſus

to the glory and praiſe of God. I believe the work is thine---thou haſt begun it---and thou wilt carry it on unto the day of the Lord Jeſus. Thou art faithful to thy word and work. In dependence upon thy faithfulneſs I hope to perſevere. Let it be done unto me according to thy promiſes, wherein thou haſt cauſed me to put my truſt. Hear, Lord, and anſwer for thy mercies ſake in Jeſus, to whom with thee and the eternal Spirit, three perſons in one God-head be equal glory and praiſe for ever and ever. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

The believer finiſhes his courſe, and enters into reſt.

THE believer is now happily arrived at the verge of life. Goodneſs and mercy have followed him all his days, and will not loſe their glory by forſaking him at the cloſe of them. It is appointed unto all men once to die, and his fixed time is at hand. The body is returning to duſt, and the ſpirit muſt appear before the throne of God. In this trying hour he truſts to the principles, which had carried him through life, and he finds them a perfect preſervative from the fear and from the power of death. The ſame faith in a reconciled God and loving Father keeps peace in his conſcience, and love in his heart. He depends upon the atonement of Immanuel, and is ſafe: he wraps himſelf up in the robe of Immanuel's righteouſneſs, and is happy. He knows he ſhall be found in Jeſus, when he ſtands before God; and therefore he looks upon death as his friend, and meets it with a hope full of glory and immortality.

This is the privilege of believers in Jeſus. They die in peace. Their principles are mighty thro' God to ſupport and comfort them in the hour

hour of death. Reader, are theſe principles thine? Examine carefully. Come to a point in this matter: for it is of infinite and eternal moment. What is thy ſtate? Art thou prepared to die? Perhaps thou art openly profane. And what wilt thou do upon thy death-bed, when the divine law accuſes thee, juſtice condemns thee, and the terrors of hell take hold of thee? The ſtings of guilt at ſuch a time will be worſe in the conſcience, than all the tortures that thy ſick body can poſſibly feel. But if thy conſcience be aſleep---O what a dreadful death! if thou go out of the world with thine eyes ſhut, and open them not till thou find the flames of hell about thee.

Perhaps thou art not afraid, becauſe thou haſt a decent outſide: O take care of truſting in thyſelf, leſt thou ſhouldſt have thy portion with the openly profane. If thou make what thou art, or haſt, any ground of thy hope before God, if thou depend on thy duties or righteouſneſs, or join them with the work of Chriſt, and meet death in this confidence--How dreadful will be thy miſtake! How inevitable thy ruin! Such falſe hopes are thus deſcribed---" Behold all ye " that kindle a fire and compaſs yourſelves about " with ſparks, walk in the light of your fire, " and in the ſparks that ye have kindled"---But mind the end---thus ſaith the Lord---" This ſhall

" ye

" ye have of mine hand, ye ſhall lie down in " ſorrow." And together with them will the open enemy of God and his Chriſt lie down. A denier of revelation is brought to the bed of languiſhing---a ſlow lingering diſtemper is carrying him off---the phyſician has given him over--his diſeaſe is mortal, and he is convinced of it. But alas! he has no preparation for death and judgment. He has ſome Chriſtian friends and they talk freely to him about his eternal ſtate, but he will hear nothing of his guilt, or of his want of a Saviour. They get a miniſter of Chriſt to viſit him, and he ſpeaks to him of ſin, which is the tranſgreſſion of the holy law, and of the juſtice of God which is engaged to give tranſgreſſors their due, and of the impoſſibility of his finding mercy at the judgment ſeat, until every demand be ſatisfied, which law and juſtice have upon him: He tries to perſuade the dying man of the Godhead of Jeſus, and of the divine work of Jeſus, but in vain. He ſets at nought the miniſter's advice, and with a hardened and impenitent heart replies---Be it as it will with me in eternity, I'll have nothing to do with your Chriſt. So he died. We need not follow him to the judgment ſeat to know what became of his ſoul, The infallible record has declared what will be the portion of the unbelieving. Their miſery is as certain as the truth of God. O reader examine

mine thyſelf: for he that believeth not is condemned already: becauſe he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Perhaps thou art in name a Chriſtian, but what thinkeſt thou of Chriſt? The grand hereſy of this day is about his perſon, and if thou art fallen into it, there is no hope in thy death. Is he Jehovah? O leave not this matter undetermined. The truth of his word and the glory of his work depend entirely upon this one point; ſo does thy peace and comfort: For if thou believe him to be any thing but the ſelf-exiſtent God, thou ſhalt die in thy ſins. His ſufferings cannot avail for thy pardon, nor his obedience for thy righteouſneſs, unleſs he be Jehovah. Without faith in him, as the ſelf-exiſtent Saviour, death will find thee under guilt, and judgment will leave thee among the enemies of God and his Chriſt.

Whatever evil there is in death to terrify, whatever pain to hurt; the bleſſed Jeſus by the grace of God taſted it for all his. The grace of the Father gave him to be the ſurety for his people unto death. He died for them, and as truly taſted death, as ever the niceſt palate taſted meat or drink. But it was like a taſte---of ſhort duration---it was not poſſible, that he ſhould be holden long under the bands of death. He roſe again on the third day: And becauſe he lives, believers in him ſhall live alſo. They are partakers

takers of his victory over death, and ſhare in all its bleſſings. The ſentence of the broken law is repealed. They do not die to bear the puniſhment of ſin. Chriſt ſuſtained that. The pains and agonies of death fell upon him—" The " ſorrows of death, ſays he, compaſſed me, and " the pains of hell gat hold upon me." He was a juſt man, who had no reaſon to fear death, but being found in the place of his people with their ſins upon him, he was to bear every thing that was dreadful in death. Hence his agonies at the approach of it---" My heart, ſays he, is ſore " pained within me, and the terrors of death " are fallen upon me: Fearfulneſs and trembling " are come upon me, and horror hath over- " whelmed me." He endured thoſe inconceivable horrors to deliver them, who through fear of death had been all their life-time ſubject to bondage. But the bondage is at an end, when they believe in his victory. Their fears are diſpelled, when they ſee the glory of the battle, which he fought and won---How by dying he took away ſin, ſatisfied juſtice, removed the curſe, conquered death, broke its ſceptre, took out its ſting, and left nothing in it but what is friendly to them. In theſe believing views they can meet death with confidence: For they cannot taſte that in death, which Chriſt taſted. He felt it, that they might not feel it: He died in agonies that they might die in peace. O my moſt

moſt loving and precious Jeſus, I believe this, let not any unbelief in me diſhonour thy complete conqueſt over all that is fearful or painful in dying. My times are in thy hand: When thou art pleaſed to bring them to an end, let me find death ſwallowed up in victory: O that I may then triumph with thy redeemed—What can ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt—ſhall the ſting of death, or the fear of death, or of ſatan, or of hell? No, thanks be to God—theſe were all conquered when Jeſus died; ſubdued for ever, when he roſe again. And he has left us many precious promiſes that we truſting in him ſhall ſhare in his victory, and find the bleſſings of it in the hour of death.

Attend then, O my ſoul, to what he has engaged to beſtow upon his dying diſciples, as the fruit of his death; and give him credit, not doubting but he will make it good. Live now in the comfort of his promiſes, and fear not. The almighty Jeſus will be with thee, and thou ſhalt conquer with him in the hour of death. Obſerve his word, which cannot be broken---"I will ran-"ſom them from the power of the grave, I will "redeem them from death: O death, I will be "thy plague, O grave, I will be thy deſtruction; "repentance ſhall be hid from mine eyes." The ranſom which he here engages to pay for his, he paid, as their ſurety, and he daily applies it to them, as their Saviour. Upon quoting this pro-

miſe, and finding by faith the happy fulfillment of it, mark how the apoſtle rejoices with the Corinthians in the near view of death---" O " death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is " thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin, and the " ſtrength of ſin is the law: but thanks be to " God, who giveth us the victory through Jeſus " Chriſt our Lord." O thou moſt glorious conqueror, almighty Jeſus, eternal thanks be to thee, that the law cannot accuſe, ſin cannot condemn, death cannot ſting thy redeemed. Thou haſt promiſed to make them happy in death, and faithful is thy word. The beloved John is one of thy witneſſes---" I heard a voice from heaven " ſaying unto me, Write, bleſſed are the dead " which die in the Lord:" Write it for the uſe of my diſciples, that it may be the ground of their faith when they come to die: I promiſe to make them bleſſed in their death: being IN me, members under me their head, and living IN the Lord, they ſhall die IN the Lord: they ſhall have union with me, and communion too, when they are dying: the hour of death, the time of their diſſolution ſhall be a ſeaſon of great bleſſedneſs: they ſhall have my preſence in their laſt moments: I will walk with them through the valley of the ſhadow of death, and they ſhall fear no evil: my rod and my ſtaff ſhall then comfort them. O my God, make thy word good. Sweet Jeſus, write this promiſe upon my heart. O help me to mix

faith

faith with it, that when mine appointed time is come, I may experience the bleſſedneſs of dying in the Lord. I wait for the time, it is not far off. O keep me, Jeſus, till that hour. Keep me, Jeſus, in that hour. Save me through life and death, and bleſs me with thine eternal ſalvation. Hear, and anſwer for thy mercies ſake. *Amen.*

Meditate, O my ſoul, upon theſe bleſſings. Conſider, how great, how many they are. Conſider alſo thine unworthineſs: Thou art leſs than the leaſt of them. And yet God has ſet his love upon thee, and has given thee the greateſt of them. He has called thee to the knowledge of his love in Jeſus, and has ſhed it abroad in thy heart. He has ſet thee in the way that leads to the eternal enjoyment of his love, has promiſed to keep thee all the way, and to bleſs thee at the end of it. He will make thee bleſſed in death, and bleſſed for evermore. Hitherto thou haſt found him faithful. Not one good thing has failed, which thou didſt aſk in faith, and wait for at his hands---Review all his dealings with thee, and ſee what infinite mercy there was in them. He made thy walk proſperous, thy warfare ſucceſsful, thy croſſes ſanctified. Thou haſt not taken a falſe ſtep, but when thou waſt not living by the faith of the Son of God. O truſt him then and be not afraid. His love has brought thee thus far: He has led thee in the right way to the verge of life, and he declares he will not leave thee nor forſake thee in

the hour of death. Fear not to look down: Fear not to go down with Jesus into the grave. He has promised---" I will be with thee?" and where-ever he is there is heaven. He is with his dying friends, and they are blessed indeed. They die in faith---they live by faith in death---and as soon as faith ceases, they live with their God for ever. The body falls asleep, and rests safely till the morning of the resurrection. The soul in a moment enters into the joy of its Lord--a joy like his---pure and holy--a fulness of joy---every sense has its proper object—enjoys it---and is satisfied for ever. O what will the heart feel in this blessedness! What acknowledgments will it make to God and the Lamb. To praise him for the wonders of his grace in bringing to that glory will be the happy employment of eternity. To see him as he is in his divine majesty is heaven. For how great communications of his love the being ever with him, and ever like him will make the soul capable of, we cannot perfectly conceive. These things are at present too high and heavenly, even for our thoughts. By faith we sometimes have a little glimpse of the glory to be revealed, and it eclipses all the grandeur of the world. There are happy moments, when we are permitted to behold the king in his beauty, when he discovers his matchless loveliness, and gives us a taste of the heavenly feast: at such blessed seasons the soul is bowed down

and humbled to the duſt, adoring the infinite mercy and goodneſs of God. If there be ſo much of heaven in theſe manifeſtations of divine love, what muſt the full enjoyment be? We may ſuppoſe a happy ſoul, entered into reſt thus meditating upon the grace, which brought it to that glory.

Bleſſing and thanks without ceaſing be unto Father, Son, and Spirit, through whoſe ſovereign grace I was choſen to this bleſſedneſs, and am now brought to the perfect and everlaſting enjoyment of it. This communion with the Godhead through Jeſus is as far beyond my former thoughts of it, as the heaven is above the earth. How great is his goodneſs, and how great is his beauty, that the moſt high and holy one would thus communicate his love unto ſinful creatures. Glory be to thee, holy Father, for predeſtinating me to the adoption of children, and for the free gift of the heavenly inheritance. Glory be to thee incarnate Jehovah, for thy covenant-undertakings for me, for thy life, death, and complete ſalvation. I worſhip thee, I glorify thee, O God the Holy Ghoſt, for quickening me, for teaching me and enabling me through believing in Jeſus to experience the love of the Father, and for bringing me to enjoy his endleſs bleſſings. Surely the goodneſs and mercy of the holy Trinity have followed me all the days of my life, were with me when I walked thro' the valley of the ſhadow of death, and are now my moſt bleſſed

portion in the houſe of the Lord. I am made a pillar in the temple of my God, and am to go no more out. O what exceeding riches of grace are theſe! What has God done for me? Angels, and brethren, help me to praiſe. My debt is immenſe. No ſaved ſinner can owe him more. It is growing every moment. My praiſes pay none of it. With my thankful heart, and it is all thankfulneſs, I only acknowledge his infinite goodneſs, and own myſelf his eternal debtor. Bleſſing and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever.

Reader, art thou in the way which leads to this glory? If not, may the Lord be merciful unto thee, and bring thee unto it.

If thou art ſeeking to be ſet right in it: Remember Jeſus is THE WAY. May his good Spirit enable thee to believe in his word and to truſt in it till thou attain to the ſalvation of thy ſoul.

If thou art in the way, and haſt communion with the Father thro' faith in the atonement and righteouſneſs of his Son, art thou maintaining it in thy daily walk, and improving it in every duty? And art thou going on thy way rejoicing in God? If thou art ſorrowing for outward croſſes, or burdened with inward conflicts, canſt thou nevertheleſs find joy and peace in believing? Doſt thou march on,

victorious in thy warfare, keeping up communion with God againſt all oppoſition of thy ſpiritual enemies? And is thy faith eſtabliſhed upon the faithfulneſs of God, that he will carry on his own work in thee unto the day of the Lord Jeſus? In this faith art thou now living? And in this faith doſt thou hope to die. Has God indeed done theſe wonders for thee? O bleſs him then with me, and let us magnify his name together. Be thou exalted Lord, in us, and by us. Every day we would grow up into nearer and holier communion with thee. We deſire to be more like thee, and to ſhew forth more of thy lovely image before men. O help us to praiſe thee better with our lips and lives. By the communion of the holy Ghoſt we would communicate more by faith with the Son in his ſalvation, and with the father in his love. O holy, bleſſed and glorious Trinity, in this divine fellowſhip we hope to find our heaven upon earth: Let it be growing and increaſing, helped forward by all means, and if it pleaſe thee, by theſe volumes. Make them, Lord, the inſtrument under thee of leading thy people into the right way; and of eſtabliſhing them in it. Accompany the reading of them with the teaching of thy Spirit, and to the advancement of thy glory. I preſent the books unto thee, ever glorious Jeſus, and lay them at thy feet. Thou knoweſt my heart: accept them graciouſly, as a public acknow-

acknowledgement for ineſtimable mercies. In thy great compaſſion overlook the faults in them: what is agreeable to the ſcripture is thine own. Make uſe of it to thy praiſe. I devote myſelf, my body, and ſoul, my tongue and pen, all I have and am to thy ſervice. I would not look upon myſelf, as any longer mine own, but being bought with a price, I would glorify thee in the uſe of all thy gifts and graces. With thee I deſire to walk through life. In thine arms I hope to die. Through thee I expect ſoon to enjoy perfect communion with the Father, and the Spirit: Therefore into thy hands I commend myſelf. Keep me in the right way. Guide me to the end of it, that I may finiſh my courſe with joy, and join thy redeemed in giving to thee with the Father and the Spirit, the three in one Jehovah, equal and everlaſting praiſe. Hear, Lord, and anſwer. *Amen.*

THE TRIUMPH OF FAITH.

Thanks be unto God who always causeth us to triumph in Christ
2 Cor. ii. 14.

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THE

PREFACE.

THE preſent treatiſe is a continuation of ſome remarks formerly publiſhed concerning the experience of a true Chriſtian, who, quickened by the ſpirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, lives by faith, and who is enabled to go forward in his walk by the faith of the Son of God. There was one volume upon this ſubject, entitled, The Life of Faith, and ſome years after, two volumes on The Walk of Faith: In which the divine helps and ſupports were conſidered great and many, not only for the eſtabliſhment of believers in the way, but alſo for their happineſs every ſtep of it, that they might rejoice in the Lord always, yea, with ſuch a

fulneſs

fulneſs of joy, as to make them triumph in the God of their ſalvation.

This is the grand goſpel privilege, which is granted to believers, as believers, and promiſed to them in the freeſt and fulleſt manner that any grant can be conveyed, ſpringing from ſovereign grace in the giver, and received not from any qualification in themſelves, but entirely from his own bounty, continued and increaſed with all the rich and ripe fruits of faith to the praiſe of the glory of the grace of God.

It has been long obſerved, and much lamented, that there are very few of theſe happy believers, who give ſuch a perfect credit to the promiſes of God in Chriſt, as to reſt their hearts upon his faithfulneſs, without any doubt or wavering: They do not truſt ſo far as the promiſes warrant them, which ſtops the exerciſe of faith, and hinders the growth of the ſpiritual life. Weak faith has little fruit. Strong faith improves love to God, loving obedience, patient ſuffering, perſevering warfare, and the other fruits of

of the Spirit: Indeed for this very purpoſe it is commanded, that we might truſt and not be afraid: And there are promiſes made to them who obey the command, and all things promiſed are poſſible to them who believe: For there is ſtrength ſufficient in the promiſer to make faith grow, yea, to make it grow exceedingly: And he has done it, giving us a happy inſtance in the church of the Theſſalonians, in which perſecution raged, but faith was victorious, and patience triumphant. It has pleaſed God to give us in the ſcriptures many encouragements for the growth of faith, which are in the following treatiſe ſet before the reader; that we may honor his word, and truſt in it at all times; eſpecially when appearances make againſt their being fulfilled. Then it is high worſhip, againſt hope to believe in hope, as the father of the faithful did: And they are his children, and follow the ſteps of his faith, who when ſin is felt in its defilement, in its guilt, in the ſenſe of inward corruptions, and of ſtrong temptations,

tations, in the many troubles of life, in the infirmities of age, and in the approach of death, put their whole truſt and confidence in the promiſes of God. Nothing elſe is appointed, either to bring in the peace of God to the conſcience, or to keep it in. God only in ſuch trials can be a ſafe refuge, and a ſure defence, and faith looking at what he has engaged to give, ſecures the promiſed help to the glory of God. Under theſe ſeveral heads ſomething is here offered from the ſcriptures of truth to encourage a more ſtedfaſt reliance on the divine faithfulneſs, than one commonly meets with. And what is ſaid upon each head is here ſet before the reader, on the authority of God's word, and is alſo followed with fervent prayer, that the end of publiſhing this treatiſe may be anſwered, even, that the ſcriptural faith may be hereby increaſed, that it may abound yet more and more, and in ſuch a great degree, as may bring the higheſt glory to God, the trueſt holineſs to the heart, and the happieſt experience in the life, and in the

the warfare of the Chriſtian. May the gracious Lord, who is the author and finiſher of the faith, accompany it with his Spirit to the advancement of his own praiſe, and to the edification of his own people. To him who keepeth promiſe for ever, be glory in the church, through Chriſt Jeſus, world without end. *Amen.*

THE

THE

TRIUMPH,

&c. &c.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION.

WHERE there has been war, a triumph ſuppoſes a battle to have been fought, a victory to have been obtained, and the great rejoicings of the conquerors upon this occaſion. The Chriſtian has his matter of triumph, but it is ſpiritual. It is always in Chriſt, the captain of his ſalvation. So it is written—"Thanks be to God, "who always cauſeth us to triumph in Chriſt." The apoſtle is ſpeaking of his preaching the goſpel. He carried the ſweet ſavor of Jeſu's name from place to place; but it was not always received as a joyful ſound, nor welcomed, as it deſerved. He met with great oppoſition. The Holy Ghoſt witneſſed that in every city, bonds and afflictions awaited him. As theſe abounded,

grace did much more abound. For he was carried on through perfecutions, imprifonment, ftoning, whipping, perils of various kinds, fuffered for Chrift, and Chrift made him victorious over them all. He not only enabled Paul to conquer, but alfo made him more than conqueror—he was the bleffed inftrument of pulling down the ftrong holds of fin and Satan, and of fetting up in the world, that kingdom of Jefus, which is flourifhing to this day, and which will triumph to eternity. A poor weak man had all the Roman empire againft him, but he did wonders. Through Chrift ftrengthening him, he went on conquering and to conquer: And to Chrift he gives all the glory; acknowledging that the gofpel, his preaching it, and the fuccefs of it, was of God, the excellency of the power was of God. "Thanks "be unto God, who always caufeth us to tri- "umph in Chrift." He, for us men, and for our falvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate, that as our furety he might live, and die and conquer for us. It was to the everlafting honour of his grace and mercy, that he would engage in this war, and undertake to deliver his people from the tyranny of their enemies. They were in bondage to fin—fold under fin --enflaved to diverfe lufts and pleafures--living according to the courfe of this world--according to the prince of the power of the air, the wicked fpirit, who now worketh effectually in the children of

of diſobedience. Theſe tyrants were leading them captive at their will, hoping ſoon to have them delivered over to death, and then to everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. In this miſerable ſtate, under ſin---under condemnation, we all were---guilty and helpleſs---not only without any means of deliverance in our own power, but without any deſire of it, being tempted to dream of liberty, while we were tied and bound with the chain of our ſins, and fancying that we were free, even while our enemies were waiting to exerciſe their utmoſt malice againſt us, by binding us with chains of everlaſting darkneſs. O what mercies---what compaſſions are in our God---in our Jeſus! He remembered us in this our low eſtate, and manifeſted the exceeding riches of his grace, in coming from heaven to ſave his people from their ſins. To this end Jehovah was manifeſted in the fleſh, as it is written, *Jer.* l. 33, 34, "The children of "Iſrael, and the children of Judah were op- "preſſed together, and all that took them cap- "tives held them faſt, and refuſed to let them "go: But their redeemer is ſtrong, the Lord of "hoſts is his name, he ſhall thoroughly plead "their cauſe." He made all our enemies his own, and fought our battles againſt them. He obeyed, that the broken law which ſtood againſt us might be magnified by his obedience: The penalties of it he endured, when the Lord laid

upon him the iniquities of us all. His croſs was his triumphal chariot, on which he vanquiſhed all our foes, *Col.* ii. 14, 15. He blotted out the hand writing of ordinances, that was againſt us, which was contrary to us, and he took it out of the way, nailing it to his croſs: And having ſpoiled principalities and powers, he made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing over them in that ſame croſs. By dying on it he put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf, and by his riſing from the dead on the third day, according to the ſcriptures, he overcame death, and him that had the power of death, that is the devil. And now as God-man in one Chriſt, the almighty Saviour of his redeemed, he is ſeated upon his throne of grace, all his enemies being made his foot-ſtool, he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come unto God by him. Such was the battle which the Redeemer fought. Such was the victory which he obtained. The important news of it is the ſubſtance of that bleſſed goſpel, which he ordered his apoſtles to preach to every creature, and which he promiſed to aſſiſt them in, and to be with them for that purpoſe to the end of the world. He is as good as his word to this day. Still faith cometh by hearing it. The holy Spirit witneſſes to it, that it is the truth of God, and he applies it, and makes it the power of God unto ſalvation. He enables the hearers to mix ſuch faith with it that they receive, and enjoy the happy fruits of Chriſt's victory. Once they were

were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, but now Chriſt hath quickened them. They were guilty, and bound over to condemnation, but the law of the ſpirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus hath freed them from the law of ſin and of death. Once they walked after the courſe of this world, but now they walk with God. Their old enemies are ſtill fighting againſt them, and watching for their deſtruction, but they are enabled to gain daily victory over them, over the world, the fleſh, and the devil, through the ſtrength of Jeſus, and through the power of his might. Their wants are many, and they are daily made more ſenſible of them, but they have an abundant ſupply of every thing that pertains to life and godlineſs, out of the infinite fulneſs of God, their Saviour.

Thus far the three volumes went, which were formerly publiſhed upon this ſubject, entitled, *The Life of Faith*, and *the Walk of Faith*. The preſent treatiſe relates to the improvement of the former doctrines, conſidering the ſcripture motives and encouragements for the believer's rejoicing always in the Lord, and triumphing in the God of his ſalvation. The ground of his triumph is the work of Chriſt: His warrant to depend upon it, is the word of Chriſt: and his actual dependence is the work of the Spirit of Chriſt. Building upon theſe principles, he is commanded to go on from faith to faith, ſtill preſſing forward that he may ſee more clearly the glory of the perſon, and the glory of the work

work of Chriſt, what he is to truſt in for his title to ſalvation, and for the things which accompany ſalvation, and may by every day's experience be growing into a more ſettled dependence upon the word of Chriſt, and upon his faithfulneſs to fulfil it: And thereby may be learning to expect conſtant ſupplies, and according as his faith increaſes receiving greater ſupplies of the power of the Spirit of Chriſt: That the God of hope may fill him with all joy and peace in believing, that he may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghoſt; And we have an encouraging example in the Theſſalonians, who had great trials, and met them with great faith. The apoſtle commended it highly, but by practice it had ſo improved, that having occaſion to mention it ſome time afterwards, he ſays,—"We are bound to "thank God always for you, brethren, as it is "meet, becauſe that your faith groweth exceed-"ingly." We have the ſame promiſes, and the ſame helps, as they had—promiſes exceeding great, and exceeding precious, containing a free grant in Chriſt of all ſpiritual bleſſings—a full warrant to make uſe of them for life and godlineſs, with commands and encouragements to truſt and not be afraid of any enemies, or of any dangers: Becauſe he is faithful who has promiſed to be with them—to guide them with his counſel—to keep them ſafe by his power—to bleſs them with his love—and never to leave them nor

forſake them: So that in all difficulties and troubles, they may go on their way rejoicing, until faith and patience have done their perfect work. To this purpoſe, a Divine, whoſe praiſe is in all the churches, has given his teſtimony; "It is an everlaſting ſpring of comfort, and encouragement unto the people of God, both in prayer, and unto prayer; they pray to him, who is mighty, mighty to do what they pray for. The Lord's promiſes are our richeſt inheritances, and that not only becauſe he hath promiſed greater and better things, than are in the compaſs of any man's power to make good, or in the compaſs of any man's underſtanding to comprehend; but becauſe he will certainly be as good in performance, as he hath been in promiſe: For he is in one mind concerning all that he hath promiſed: He will be merciful as he hath promiſed, and pardon ſin, as he hath promiſed, and ſanctify all our troubles, as he hath promiſed: he will give us his Spirit, as he hath promiſed, and ſave us eternally as he hath promiſed." A great Layman thus confirms the ſame truth---Were God but believed in what he ſays, all the temptations of Satan, and the doubtings of our unbelieving hearts, would be ſilenced and brought to nothing. What exceeding folly is it in our hearts, that God, who never deceived any that truſted in him, ſhould be diſtruſted by any, and not believed by all. He is the God of truth:

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ſo is his word the word of truth. And not any ſoul, that ever tried God by truſting him upon his word, but found him ſo. Oh, then take God's word, and our hearts will be quiet. Though the heathen do rage, yet they imagine but a vain thing. In this glorious doctrine, free grace in God is the fountain, full ſatisfaction to divine juſtice the way, but perfect ſalvation and redemption to all his elect body in Chriſt the end. And truly when a ſoul can ſay, My Beloved is mine, and I am his, he hath ſpoken all at once. I know no other light nor rule, but the word and Spirit to make out any thing of God to any ſoul: The glory of the great day will be---God is mine, and I am his."

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Some ſcripture encouragements for the triumph of faith.

ALL the old teſtament words which we tranſlate triumph, ſignify great joy, felt in the heart, and expreſſed outwardly in word or deed; a jubilee of joy, even joy in the higheſt, as near as it can be to the joy of heaven. In the new teſtament the word is uſed but twice: Firſt, for what Chriſt engaged to do for us, and ſecondly, for what Chriſt engaged to do in us. For as he undertook to fight our battles againſt all our enemies---ſin, the world, Satan, death and hell: And the Captain of our ſalvation has gained a complete victory, and had a moſt glorious triumph over them in his own perſon---when he blotted out the hand writing of ordinances that was againſt us, which was contrary to us, and he took it out of the way, nailing it to his croſs: And having ſpoiled principalities and powers, he made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing over them in that ſame croſs. And he ſtill goes on conquering and to conquer: By the preaching of his croſs and paſſion, his reſurrection and aſcenſion, he is to this very day exalting the honours of his victory and triumph in the hearts and lives

lives of his redeemed, giving them ſuch a ſhare in his conqueſts, that they ought to be ever praiſing him with joyful lips--Now thanks be unto God, who always cauſeth us to triumph in Chriſt. This was the apoſtle's happy experience. He found that the goſpel, and his preaching of it, and the great ſucceſs which attended it, were the fruits of Chriſt's preſence with him, and bleſſing upon him: Therefore to him he gave all the glory. So do we ſtill. We ſee the triumphs of the croſs ſpread far and wide, and we praiſe him for our day of goſpel grace. The crucified Saviour in his majeſty rides on proſperouſly in the chariots of ſalvation, and his enemies fall under him. In the day of his power he makes them a willing people. They ſubmit to his ſceptre, and acknowledge him to be their Lord, and their God. Under his banner they fight the good fight of faith, and they daily conquer, yea, they are more than conquerors through him who loveth them, crowned conquerors in glory everlaſting. Thus it appears that the triumph of the Head includes the triumph of his members. The fountain from whence ſprings their preſent, and their eternal joy, is God--God in Chriſt. They glory in the victories of the God-man; Becauſe of his commandment; becauſe of his free promiſe, which is a perfect warrant for the fulleſt confidence: And becauſe of his goodneſs, truth and power, which are bound to fulfil all his engagements.

ments. Looking to these infallible securities, the believer's heart is established, trusting in the Lord. Being of the true circumcision, he would put no confidence in the flesh, but would be daily crucifying it with its affections and lusts, and bringing all high thoughts of self to the obedience of Christ. If he has been long standing in the faith--an old christian--if he has received much consolation from his Lord---or has been very active and successful in his service; his trust is never in himself. The ground of his believing is always one and the same. He has no new doctrine to learn. No new warrant to encourage him to believe. The word of God---Thus saith the Lord, is always sufficient: And ought to draw forth the fullest credit, that can possibly be given to the testimony of the God of truth. What was advanced before in *The Life of Faith*, and in the *Walk of Faith*, is taken for granted in the present treatise. Here is no new doctrine. Salvation is in Christ Jesus, and in no other: I am, says he, *the truth*, the one saving truth, like himself, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. One Lord, one faith, one salvation. And whoever believes this aright is in a safe state, in which there is no change with respect to God; no variableness, or shadow of turning. Whatever his own apprehensions may be, the word of the Lord endureth for ever. He may be tempted in a legal hour to cast away his confidence,

confidence, but the counſel of the Lord ſhall ſtand. He may change, but I, ſaith God, change not. For the gracious gifts and calling of God are without repentance---they are ſuch that it cannot repent him of beſtowing them, or of continuing them, when once beſtowed. As the believer has no new truth to learn, only to improve the principles of the doctrine of Chriſt: So he has no new title to expect. Under the free grant and gift of God, ſalvation comes to him of grace, in the moſt ſovereign way that can be conceived. And his warrant to receive it is the divine command; and when he has been enabled to receive it by the obedience of faith, the divine promiſe aſſures him, that he ſhall not periſh for his ſins, but that he ſhall have everlaſting life. Believing the promiſe is the beſt title that poſſibly can be to this ſalvation; for we are ſaved freely by grace, through faith, and that not of ourſelves, neither ſalvation nor faith; both are the gifts of God. And under the title all the bleſſings which accompany ſalvation are included, all the things which are freely given to us of God--a ſufficiency of preſent grace, and the full poſſeſſion of eternal glory. This is the good old foundation, upon which the heirs of promiſe have always built their faith and hope. They knew, that all fulneſs was in Chriſt for their uſe and enjoyment: And they were perſuaded, that they ſhould honor him moſt, by believing this with the ſtrongeſt certainty.

certainty. They could not truſt too ſoon, nor too much, to his faithfulneſs. And therefore they come boldly to the throne of grace, that they may receive out of his fulneſs at all times, for all things, for body and ſoul, for earth and heaven, what they wanted, and what he had promiſed. The more they live thus by faith, they will experience more occaſion to rejoice in the Lord: And to find that his arm to fulfil will always go as far as his promiſe, even to bleſs the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly things in Chriſt. This indeed is ſtrong faith, but it is the gift of a ſtrong God: it does not depend, in the leaſt, on what the believer can do for himſelf, but on what the Almighty has engaged to do for him, and in him, and by him: For he requires and commands it in this high degree: There is grace ſufficient to bring it into uſe and practice, as far as the commands go, all things promiſed being poſſible to him that believeth: And they who have truſted moſt to the faithfulneſs of God, who againſt hope believed in hope, have experienced that God did never leave them nor forſake them. He magnified his word above all his name. There he has made his name to ſhine forth, and all his attributes are magnified in their greateſt perfection. The believers on earth, and the ſaints in heaven, praiſe God for his word: becauſe it is the inſtru-

ment of his Spirit, by which he beſtows grace, and according to which, he gives glory. The fulfilling of his word runs through time, and will run through eternity. Bleſſed be God for his word of promiſe: Bleſſed be the Lord, that it will be fulfilling for ever and ever. This being the caſe, it becomes neceſſary to enquire into the divine records, and to ſee what a full warrant God has given us to truſt and not be afraid: And this to every believer, there being the ſame ground to believe with the ſtrongeſt faith, as to believe at all.

This enquiry is the more neceſſary, becauſe of the place which faith holds in our religion. It reaches to the whole of it: So that nothing is good before God, however fair and ſpecious it may appear to men, without it. The conſcience, the heart, and its affections, are purified only by faith. All duties, for their right motive, and for their acceptance, depend upon it. Without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God. No trials and afflictions can be patiently and profitably endured, unleſs faith be in exerciſe. Our whole warfare is carried on, and can be, by our being ſtrong in the Lord, and fighting in the power of his might, finiſhed victoriouſly only by faith. Indeed it enters ſo much into every thing wherein we have to do with God, that the ſtrengthening of it is the ſtrengthening of every other grace; which are weak or vigorous according as more

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or leſs faith enters into them. And therefore the ſcripture encouragements for our growth in faith ſhould be well weighed with much prayer, frequent meditation, and thankſgiving, that they may have their proper effect upon the believer's heart and life. And as this can be done only by power from on high: Aſſiſtance muſt ever be ſought from thence, and depended upon. The Holy Spirit is the very breath of ſpiritual life, and of all ſpiritual activity. Every godly motion of the heart is from his holy inſpiration. So the ſcripture teaches: 2 *Cor.* iii. 5. "Not that we (even apoſtles) are ſufficient of ourſelves to think any thing as of ourſelves, but our ſufficiency is of God." So we are taught to pray: O Lord, from whom all good things do come, grant to us thy humble ſervants, that by thy holy inſpiration we may think thoſe things that be good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the ſame, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.* Fifth Sunday after Eaſter, and again, the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity. O God, foraſmuch as without thee we are not able to pleaſe thee; mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

A great Divine has thus expreſſed the ſame ſentiments.

"In thoſe who are truly converted all ſaving truths are tranſcribed out of the ſcripture into their

their hearts. They are taught of God; ſo as they find all truths, both concerning the eſtate, and the gracious and happy eſtate of man, in themſelves. They carry a body of divinity in them, and about them; ſo as from a ſaving feeling they can ſpeak of converſion, of grace, of the Spirit, &c. and from this acquaintance are ready to yield and give up themſelves to truth revealed, and to God ſpeaking by it. And thus a man may know his eſtate before God by his reliſh for the word. There is a heavenly and divine reliſh in the word of God, as for inſtance ---Take the doctrine of his providence, that all things ſhall work together for the beſt to them that love God. What a ſweet word is this! A whole kingdom is not worth this promiſe---That whatever befals a Chriſtian in this world, there is an over-ruling Providence to ſway all to good, to help forward his eternal good---That Chriſt will be preſent with us in all conditions---That he will give us his Holy Spirit--That when we confeſs our ſins, and lay them open, he is merciful to forgive them---That if our ſins were red as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as wool. What kind of incredible ſweetneſs is in theſe to a heart that is prepared for theſe comforts? The doctrines of reconciliation, of adoption, of glory to come, of the offices of Chriſt, and ſuch like, how ſweet are they? They reliſh wonderfully to a ſanctified ſoul. Theſe truths that come out of the mouth of

of Chriſt, and out of the miniſtry concerning Chriſt, they are moſt ſweet of all. Oh how ſweet were theſe words to the poor man---*Thy ſins are forgiven thee*---Do you think they went not to his heart? The beſt diſcovery of a true affection to Chriſt, and of a true ſtate in grace, is form our affection to the word of Chriſt. Wherever there is an intereſt in Chriſt, there is an high reſpect to the word."

A believer truſting to theſe helps, and making a diligent uſe of theſe means, in reading the charter of grace, will find ſuch a faith frequently deſcribed and required, as relies on the truth of God without doubt or wavering, as depends on his faithfulneſs to his promiſes, with the fulleſt confidence of the heart, and waits on his fulfilling them, ſtedfaſtly perſuaded, that he has ſpoken nothing with his mouth but what he will infallibly make good with his arm.

All the gifts and graces of God come to us in his promiſes, and cannot be received or enjoyed, but in the way of believing. What then can be a greater encouragement not to ſtagger at any promiſe through unbelief, than that God has declared it is a ſervice well pleaſing and acceptable to him. It is high worſhip, to be ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God: For it is a gift of his love, and a grace of his Spirit, and his own ſpecial work in the hearts of his people. In the day of his power he makes them willing, and he enables them to ſet to their ſeal, that God is

true. So we read—" By faith in Chriſt, Enoch " walked with God, and he had this teſtimony, " that he pleaſed God, but without this faith it " is impoſſible to pleaſe him:" Therefore Enoch's ſtate, and his walk, and his tranſlation, were all by faith. Now we know, that the judgment of God is according to truth, and he has declared in the word of truth, that whatſoever is not of faith is ſin. So that it is impoſſible it ſhould pleaſe a moſt holy God; who has magnified his word above all his name, and who delights to ſee his people do the ſame, magnifying it, by giving it the fulleſt credit of their hearts, and the moſt perfect dependence of their lives.

He has alſo required this by his expreſs command: This is his commandment, that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, who has ſaid, " Ye believe in God, believe " alſo in me," with the ſame faith, and with the ſame worſhip: And when the jailor enquired of Paul and Silas, Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved? They anſwered—Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved. And this belief is commanded in very trying circumſtances, when the outward ſupports of faith ſeem to fail, and the inward comforts are at a very lowebb: " Who is among you that feareth the Lord, " that obeyeth the voice of his ſervant, that " walketh in darkneſs, and hath no light: Let " him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay

" upon his God,"--his God ſtill. That relation is always the ſame: And ſo are the bleſſings which are included in it, and which he cannot fail to beſtow upon them who honor his word in ſuch trials of their faith, that againſt hope they believe in hope: For bleſſed are all they who put their truſt in him.

For the farther confirmation of their faith he has ſtrengthened his commands, with the moſt encouraging promiſes of grace to help in every time of need. Aſk, and ye ſhall have: For he giveth to all aſkers liberally, and upbraideth not, come they ever ſo often, or aſk ever ſo much: yea, our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that aſk him: And his influence goes as far as any promiſe, for he is the mighty power of God unto ſalvation to every one that believeth. Whatever is promiſed, he is almighty to fulfil. So we read when our Lord curſed the barren fig tree, the apoſtles marvelled, that it preſently withered away. Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them, Verily I ſay unto you, if ye have faith and doubt not, ye ſhall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but alſo if ye ſhall ſay unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou caſt into the ſea; it ſhall be done: And all things whatſoever ye ſhall aſk in prayer believing, ye ſhall receive: For believing honors the truth of the promiſer, and aſking in prayer for the fulfilling of it, engages and ſecures the pro-

miſed grace. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much; ſo much, that the prayer of faith has opened and ſhut heaven. It has done wonders in removing mountains of difficulties, and conquering hoſts of foes, which rendered it ſeemingly impoſſible that the word of God ſhould be eſtabliſhed. But faith gained the victory, and triumphed glorioufly.

It has pleaſed God alſo to confirm all theſe arguments, by revealing the motive, on which he made the promiſes. It was love. They are all free grace promiſes. In his councils, in the revealing them, in the fulfilling them, love directs the whole. They are diſcoveries of what is in the Father's heart to his children, and are the means of conveying his fatherly bleſſings, eſpecially ſuch a perſuaſion of his love to them, as will work love to him, and they work by love. For we love him, becauſe he firſt loved us: Therefore he ſpeaks to them comfortably, addreſſing himſelf to them in the tendereſt compaſſion, and calling them by the deareſt names—his choſen—his beloved--his adopted--his children--his friends--heirs, heirs of God--joint heirs with Chriſt, who is Lord of all--his peculiar treaſure--his portion --theſe, and many other endearing names, are intended to convince them of his love, and to win, and engage their hearts in love to him: That when it is given them to believe the truth of his promiſes, they might be certain of their

fulfilment. God is love: He delighteth in his people. His heart is ſo ſet upon them, that in his dealings with them, love has the appointing, the directing, and the bleſſing of all. His love to them had no beginning, and it will have no end. It beſtows on the happy objects of it, grace, and it ſecures to them glory. Love has crowned their Head. And love will crown all his members. For out of his fulneſs they are moſt freely invited to come, and take all ſpiritual bleſſings, as the earneſt of eternal. Behold, what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon them! who can believe it, and not love him again!

It has pleaſed God alſo to give us ſome examples of his ſingular favor, to them who acted ſtrong faith, and to whom he therefore adminiſtered ſtrong conſolation. The apoſtle ſays, "That whatſoever things were written afore-"time were written for our learning, that we "through patience and comfort of the ſcriptures "might have hope." And then he prays, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and "peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, "by the power of the Holy Ghoſt." And when the Holy Ghoſt gives it this bleſſed effect, he always fills the heart with gratitude and thankfulneſs. Thus it operated in the day when the believer was enabled to ſay, "O Lord, I will "praiſe

" praiſe thee: Though thou waſt angry with " me, thine anger is turned away, and thou " haſt comforted me. Behold, God is my ſal- " vation, I will truſt and not be afraid: For the " Lord Jehovah is my ſtrength and my ſong, he " alſo is become my ſalvation. Therefore with " joy ſhall ye draw water out of the fountain of " ſalvation." O what reviving cordials did the father of the faithful draw out of it! who againſt hope believed in hope, that he ſhould become the father of many nations, according to that which was ſpoken: " So ſhall thy ſeed be: And " being not weak in faith, he conſidered not his " own body now dead, neither yet the deadneſs " of Sarah's womb: He ſtaggered not at the " promiſe of God through unbelief, but was " ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God:" And being fully perſuaded, that what he had promiſed, he was able alſo to perform. For this heroic faith, he is celebrated in ſcripture, and propoſed to us for an example. One of his children was enabled to follow cloſe the ſteps of his faith, through a life of continual and great ſufferings, and to triumph in the proſpect of a violent death. " I am now ready to be offered up, " and the time of my departure is at hand: I " have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my " courſe, I have kept the faith: Henceforth " there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſ- " neſs,

" nefs, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will " give me in that day, and not to me only, but " unto all them that love his appearing."

We have another example given us in the fifty-fixth Pfalm. On whatever occafion the prophet indited it, the Spirit of prophecy teaches us to apply it to the Son of David, who is Chrift the Lord. It defcribes his great trials, and continual perfecutions, and his invincible faith, by which he was carried through them, when all the world was againft him. The whole Pfalm is a prayer made up of the moft perfect truft, and confidence in the faithfulnefs of God to his word, and he affures himfelf that heaven and earth fhall pafs away, before one jot or tittle of it could fail. He had enemies, many, mighty, cunning, cruel, united together to deftroy him, Acts iv. 27, but his heart was eftablifhed, trufting in the Lord. He read, he knew, he believed the promifes made to him, and, without doubt or wavering, he waited for the fulfilling of them. Thus he viewed the Father's covenant engagements, who had declared; " Thus faith God the " Lord, he that created the heavens, and ftretch- " ed them out, he that fpread forth the earth, " and that which cometh out of it: He that " giveth breath unto the people upon it, and " fpirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord " have called thee in righteoufnefs, and I will " hold thy hand, and I keep thee, and I will " give

" give thee for a covenant of the people," &c. On this rock he built his faith, and could not be moved. " The Lord God, ſays he, hath open-" ed mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither " turned away back: I gave my back to the " ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked " off the hair: I hid not my face from ſhame and " ſpitting: For the Lord God will help me, " therefore ſhall I not be confounded: therefore " have I ſet my face like a flint, and I know that " I ſhall not be aſhamed: He is near that juſti-" fieth me, who will contend with me? Let us " ſtand together. Who is mine adverſary? Let " him come near to me. Behold the Lord God " will help me, who is he that ſhall condemn " me? Lo, they all ſhall wax old as a garment, " the moth ſhall eat them up." What an undaunted courage is here manifeſted? In this ſpirit of faith, he prays---

" Be gracious unto me, O God, becauſe fallen " man would devour me: all the day long " he is fighting againſt me, and oppreſſing me: " all the day long mine enemies would devour " me; for they are many who fight againſt me, " O thou moſt high. In the day, when I might " have reaſon to fear, I will put my truſt in " thee: I ſhall praiſe God becauſe of his word: " In God I have put my truſt, I will not fear " what fleſh can do unto me: All the day long " they torture my words: All their devices are

" againſt

" againſt me for evil: They aſſemble together;
" they hide themſelves: They watch my ſteps,
" as if they were waiting for my life: Shall they
" eſcape for their wickedneſs? In thine anger,
" O God, thou wilt bring theſe people under:
" Thou numbereſt my wanderings; thou haſt put
" my tears into thy bottle: Are they not recorded
" in thy regiſter? In the day, when I ſhall pray
" unto thee, then ſhall mine enemies be driven
" back: This I have known for certain, becauſe
" God is on my ſide: I will praiſe God, becauſe
" of his word: I will praiſe Jehovah, becauſe of
" his word: In God have I truſted, I will not
" fear what man can do unto me. Thy vows
" are upon me, O God. I will pay my thankſ-
" givings unto thee: For thou haſt delivered my
" life from death. Wilt thou not alſo keep my
" feet from falling, that I may be able to walk
" in the preſence of God, in the light of life
" everlaſting?"

O what a perfect truſt and confidence is this! And how loudly does it call upon us to look to his example, that God would give us grace to follow the ſteps of his faith. Obſerve, O my ſoul, and conſider the pattern ſet before thee. He had God on his ſide---the promiſes---the power---the providences of the Almighty. He knew that every ſtep was marked, every tear noticed, and that God had them in the book of his remembrance. In this faith he met his trials,

and

and came off triumphant. Notwithſtanding his many weary ſteps, and his ſtrong crying and tears under that ſorrow, which never had its like, yet he knew that he ſhould be heard---and he was heard: His enemies fell before him: But they roſe and returned to the combat. Upon the word he caſts his anchor again. He truſts to it: And he finds it firm and ſure ſtill. The ſtorm is great; it continues; it encreaſes; all thy waves and ſtorms, ſays he to his God, are gone over me. But, my ſoul, truſt thou ſtill in the Lord: for my hope is in him. His word is my ſtay. It cannot be broken. I praiſe him for it; again I praiſe him for it. Truſting in it, now my fears are gone. God is my helper, and I will not fear what man can do unto him. O what a pattern is here ſet for us! May the meditation upon it be uſeful. May the gracious Lord, who is the author and the finiſher of the faith, bleſs the means of his own appointing, for the ſtrengthening of it. And in the uſe of them, looking up for the conſtant ſupplies of his Spirit, may he enable us to go on from ſtrength to ſtrength, keeping this example always in view, until he bring us in peace unto the end of our faith.

Theſe are ſome of the ſcripture grounds, upon which the Triumph of Faith is built. It ſtands upon the almighty power of God, as engaged to fulfil his word. For his word is his deed. To take him at his word is the proper exerciſe of faith,

faith. He hath promiſed and it is done. To reſt thus upon it, as what cannot poſſibly fail, is the foundation of chriſtian worſhip: And when it is eſtabliſhed in the heart, in the love of the truth, it conſtitutes the chief of that ſervice, which is perfect freedom: For God has declared himſelf well pleaſed with our truſting to his truth and faithfulneſs. He has commanded us to do it without doubt or wavering. He has promiſed grace ſufficient to enable us thus to believe, and we cannot put too much truſt and confidence in his arm and power. And he has alſo given us examples of thoſe, who honoured him with the fulleſt reliance of their hearts, and had reaſon to rejoice in the Lord, who keepeth promiſe for ever. Glory be to him for ſuch encouragements of our faith. O that they may have their proper effect. May the Holy Ghoſt apply them by his grace, and give us ſuch a faith, as may be well pleaſing unto God; ſuch a faith as he has commanded, and for the full exerciſe of which he has made exceeding great promiſes. Help us, O God of all grace, to truſt and not be afraid: For thou art faithful: Thy word and thy promiſes give us full ſecurity to truſt in the Lord at all times; becauſe in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength: And bleſſed are all they who put their truſt in him.

But by what ways and means ſhall theſe arguments and encouragements have their full effect? This

This is the main point; and it is ſettled beyond diſpute upon ſcripture authority. The ſame Spirit, who revealed the promiſes, is alſo the fulfiller of them: And he is almighty. The bleſſing on the uſe of the means is entirely from him: It is he who teacheth man knowledge: And from him we are to ſeek it in prayer. With all our reading, hearing, ſtudying, meditating upon the ſcriptures, we muſt look up to him for his divine teaching. If any of you, believers, lack wiſdom, let him aſk it of God, who giveth to all aſkers liberally, and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him; but let him aſk in faith. Here is a command and a promiſe. When we lack wiſdom, which we always do, as much as we want breath, we are to aſk it of the Spirit of wiſdom, and it ſhall be given us. He will make us wiſe unto ſalvation. He will keep us in the uſe of means dependent on his leading us into all uſeful truth, and of his revealing to us the things which are freely given to us of God, to ſhew them to us, as realities, and to put us into the enjoyment of them, as bleſſings. In this dependence on him, we live, and move, and have our being. Our ſpiritual life and faculties, and the exerciſe of them, and the improvement of them, are entirely from his influence. For the Apoſtle, mentioning the ſeveral gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, ſays, "All theſe worketh that one, and the ſelf-"ſame Spirit, dividing to every man his own "gifts,

" gifts, according to his own will." To him then we are to look up for every good gift, and every perfect gift. Whenever we open the Bible, we ſhould aſk his light and his teaching. He is the chief commentator. He only can put the ſcriptures into our inward parts, and write them upon our hearts, ſo that we may experience them to be the power of God unto our own ſalvation. Our firſt reformers were of this ſentiment, exhorting us to pray, that by the holy inſpiration of God's Spirit, we may think thoſe things that be good, and by his merciful guiding, may perform the ſame. Grant to us, Lord, we beſeech thee, the Spirit to think and do always ſuch things as be rightful; that we who cannot do any thing that is good without thee, may by thee be enabled to live according to thy will, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, *Amen.* Ninth Sunday after Trinity.

As they prayed, ſo they ſung: For we meet with two hymns, inſerted by the reformers in the Common Prayer Book, appointed to be ſung at the ordaining of prieſts, and at the conſecration of biſhops. The firſt begins with theſe words---

> Come, Holy Ghoſt, our ſouls inſpire,
> And lighten with celeſtial fire, &c.

Out of the ſecond I quote ſome verſes, not for any excellency of the poetry, but for the ſoundneſs

ſoundneſs of the divinity expreſſed in theſe lines---

Come, Holy Ghoſt, eternal God,
Proceeding from above,
Both from the Father and the Son,
The God of peace and love.

Viſit our minds, and into us
Thy heav'nly grace inſpire,
That in all truth and godlineſs
We may have true deſire.

Thou in thy gifts art manifold,
Whereby Chriſt's Church doth ſtand,
In faithful hearts writing thy law,
The finger of God's hand.

According to thy promiſe made,
Thou giveſt ſpeech of grace,
That thro' thy help, the praiſe of God
May ſtand in every place.

O Holy Ghoſt, into our ſouls
Send down thy heavenly light,
Kindle our hearts with fervent love,
To ſerve God day and night.

Strengthen and ſtabliſh our weakneſs,
So feeble and ſo frail,
That neither devil, world, nor fleſh,
Againſt us may prevail.

Grant us, O Lord, thro' thee to know
The Father moſt of might,
That of his dear beloved Son,
We may attain the ſight.

And

And that with perfect faith alſo,
We may acknowledge thee,
The Spirit of them both always,
One God, in perſons three.

From theſe authorities, it appears to be the doctrine of the ſcriptures, and of our reformers in harmony with them, That ſpiritual life, and knowledge, and faith in Chriſt, and hope in him, that maketh not aſhamed, and holy love, with every godly motion of the heart, come from the holy inſpiration of God the Spirit. It is from him, that we underſtand the ſcriptures, in the mind of the Spirit: It is from his grace that we grow in ſcripture knowledge, and perſevere in the uſe of means, and at the ſame time in a conſtant dependence on his preſence in them, for the furtherance and joy of our faith. He begins, he carries on, and he perfects our learning in his revealed word and will. O that he may make us, and keep us good ſcholars, in an abiding ſenſe of the neceſſity of his divine teaching: that the Spirit and the word may go together in our Bible ſtudies, and Bible experience: ſo that this may be the daily prayer of our faith.

O thou Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, who haſt taught us that ſecret things belong to the Lord our God, but thoſe things which are revealed belong to us, and to our children for ever, open the eyes of our underſtanding to underſtand what is revealed in the ſcriptures for our uſe.

Diſpoſe

Diſpoſe us to hear them, read them, and meditate on them, with profit. And help us to mix more faith with them, that they may become more precious: In every day's reading, grant that we may find them to be the ingrafted word, and that we are really branches grafted into the tree of life, and by the rain, and ſhining of heaven, enabled to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit abundantly. For all theſe bleſſings keep us ever dependent on thy divine teaching, that our fruits may grow richer and riper—we may be more humble in our hearts, and more thankful in our lives; And ſo we, who can learn nothing as we ought without thee, may by thy grace be made wiſe unto eternal ſalvation, through faith, which is in Chriſt Jeſus—To whom with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Spirit, be equal honor and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

The believer's triumph in the Lord his righteouſneſs.

THE object of his rejoicing is always one and the ſame, yeſterday, to-day, and for ever, without any variableneſs, or ſhadow of turning. It is Chriſt, God in Chriſt, concerning whom the commandment runs---Rejoice in the Lord Jeſus always, and again, I ſay, rejoice; there being in him a fountain of joy ſpringing up into everlaſting life. What he is in his own wonderful perſon---what is revealed of his gracious works and ways in his dealings with the ſinners of mankind---what he did for them in the days of his fleſh---what he does in them by his Spirit in time---what he has promiſed to give them in eternity; in every poſſible view that can be taken of him, a believer may, and ought to rejoice always, and that with a fulneſs of joy: For thus the Apoſtle offers up his praiſe---" Now thanks be to God, " who always cauſeth us to triumph in Chriſt." For he has in his perſon every poſſible ſubject of triumphant joy. He is true and very God: And he is true and very man---God and man in one Chriſt. The prophet Iſaiah foretold this marvellous union, and gloried in the proſpect: For

us men, and for our salvation, a child is born, and a son is given: And his name shall be called Wonderful, because the child is the mighty God, and the Son is the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. This is the great mystery of godliness, of which the Saints in the Old Testament sang with the sweetest melody, in their hearts unto the Lord, as the prophet does in the one hundred and forty-eighth Psalm, calling upon all in heaven and earth, with all their inhabitants, to join him in the praises of Immanuel: Because his Name alone is excellent, and his praise above heaven and earth. So that New Testament saint felt it, who declared, that he accounted all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and I do account them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him---found so united to him as to be one with him: For he was united to our nature, in order to bring about another most blessed union. He taking our nature, that we might take his---He made the Son of man, that we might be made the sons of God---He having the power of an endless life, that he might give spiritual and eternal life to all believers: For they in the day of his power are joined to the Lord by one Spirit---the same Spirit in the members as in the Head---that through him, their Head, they might be able to say, Truly our fellowship is with the

Father

Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt, by the bond of his Spirit. It is not poſſible for man to conceive higher things, than our Lord has prayed for in theſe words: "Neither pray I for theſe "alone, but for them alſo who ſhall believe on "me through their word: That they all may "be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in "thee, that they alſo may be one in us, that the "world may believe that thou haſt ſent me: "And the glory which thou gaveſt me, I have "given them, that they may be one, even as "we are one." By virtue of this union with Chriſt, who is the Head over all things to the church, his members have fellowſhip with him in his holy life: He is the Lord Jehovah their righteouſneſs: For them he became ſubject to the law, and obedient to its precepts, born of a woman, and made under the law, that through his obedience many might be made righteous. Lo, I come, ſays he, to DO thy will, O God, and he did it by fulfilling all righteouſneſs. As the ſurety for his people, what he did, when he magnified the law, and made it infinitely honourable in all its demands, was for them, and for their juſtification, that it might be imputed unto them for righteouſneſs, and they might be dealt with as righteous at the judgment ſeat of God. In this the father of the faithful made his boaſt, and gloried all the day long: For we read, that he believed in God, and God imputed to him righteouſneſs, loving him

as his friend, and bleſſing him in all things. Now it was not written for his ſake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us alſo, to whom it ſhall be imputed, if we believe on him that raiſed up Jeſus our Lord from the dead: For the children of believing Abraham are freely made heirs, as he was, of the righteouſneſs which is by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt. Hear one of them with what heart-felt joy he celebrates his triumphant ſtate in Chriſt: "I will hope continually, and I will praiſe thee more and more—my mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy righteouſneſs, and thy ſalvation all the day: For I know not the numbers thereof: I will go in the ſtrength of the Lord God, I will make mention of thy righteouſneſs, even of thine ONLY." He found the bleſſings flowing from it numberleſs, and endleſs: So that it was all he wanted for his juſtification to life, and for his title to glory—it ONLY. In the ſame Pſalm, admiring and adoring the wonders of the gift of grace, he breaks out: "Thy righteouſneſs, O God, is very high, who haſt done great things: O God, who is like unto thee?" He was ſo complete in this righteouſneſs of Chriſt, that he would mix nothing with it for his free acceſs to God, or for his full acceptance before God. He knew, that this righteouſneſs of faith was appointed of God, was the gift of his grace, and was all-ſufficient, being an everlaſting righteouſneſs: And therefore it effectually removed the conſciouſneſs of ſin from his heart

heart, and enabled him to come boldly to the throne of grace, where he ſtood perfectly juſtified in Jeſus. And in the ſame ſpirit we hear a New Teſtament ſaint reſolving to exclude all glorying, except in Chriſt, and in his righteouſneſs, " in whom God can be juſt, and yet the juſtifier of him who believeth in Jeſus. Where is boaſting then? It is excluded. By what law? By the law of works? Nay, but by the law of faith: Therefore we conclude, that a man is juſtified by faith without the deeds of the law; and that Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth." This was the apoſtle's higheſt ambition, to be found in his precious Saviour. O that I may rejoice in him through life, and may be found in him at the hour of death, and at the day of judgement---- found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith. Bleſſed teſtimony for Jeſus---encouraging example to place our whole truſt and confidence in the Lord our righteouſneſs, and our ſtrength: For he is the ſame to us as he was to the apoſtle Paul, and we have as good reaſon to triumph as he had, becauſe it is written, " I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, " my ſoul ſhall be joyful in my God: For he " hath clothed me with the garments of ſalva- " tion, he hath covered me with the robe of " right-

" righteouſneſs, as a bridegroom decketh him-
" ſelf with ornaments, and a bride adorneth
" herſelf with her jewels: For as the earth
" bringeth forth its bud, and as the garden
" cauſeth the things that are ſown in it to ſpring
" forth; ſo the Lord God will cauſe righteouſ-
" neſs and praiſe to ſpring forth before all the
" nations." This is the righteouſneſs of faith, and theſe are the fruits of it, which abound to the glory of God, even peace with him, joy in him, a holy walk with him, and a victorious warfare by him. In the Lord ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and ſhall glory. Herein to glory is the believer's bounden duty. He is called to it, as his goſpel privilege, and according to his faith he does triumph in it, as his preſent happineſs, and as a good ground for his hope of eternal joy. Wonderful bleſſings are promiſed to this faith and hope, and they are truly experienced at this day. Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, for his providing ſuch a garment for glory and beauty. He has warranted thee to put it on, and having through it free acceſs into his preſence, he has commanded thee to join that great multitude, whom no one can number, who are ſtanding before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands, and who cry with a loud voice, ſaying, " Salvation to our God, who ſitteth upon
" the throne, and to the Lamb for ever" Their

robes

robes are as white as the light, being washed clean in the blood of the Lamb, and through him they have conquered, as the palms in their hands denote; yea, are more than conquerors, having crowns of righteousness upon their heads, which can never fade away. For grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. O what matter of triumph is here! A righteousness absolutely perfect and everlasting! This greatly enhances all our high joys in Christ, that there is full security for their continuance. It depends on the faithfulness of God to his word and promise, fixed in his eternal counsels, and established upon immutable things. "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord, "and mine is an everlasting righteousness: Lift "up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon "the earth beneath: For the heavens shall vanish "away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old "like a garment, and they that dwell therein "shall die in like manner, but my salvation shall "be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be "abolished." The state of a believer is always one and the same on God's part. He may vary in his apprehensions of his state, but with God there is no variableness, or shadow of turning. He may be a believer walking in darkness—tempted to doubt; he may pay too much attention to sense and feeling—may get into a legal spirit—

ſpirit—his evidences may be clouded—when outward things and providences ſeem to make againſt him, his faith may be ſore tried, and he may ſtagger at the promiſes of God through ſome fit of unbelief—the man changeth, but God changeth not. His mercies are ſure mercies. They cannot fail: For they ſpring from the ocean of grace, and are ſtreams which no created power can cut off: But they ſhall infallibly return to it again, and ſhall bring with them all the happy objects of his love. The Father choſe them, and gave them to his Son, who has all their names written in the Lamb's book of life: For them he lived and died: And when he preſents them at the laſt day to the Father—"Be-"hold I, and the children whom thou haſt given "me," not one of them ſhall be wanting: For the Holy Spirit is by his office the Lord and giver of life to them, and in the day of his power he enables them to receive Jeſus, and to live by faith upon him, as members united to, and in fellowſhip with their glorified Head. This covenant of the bleſſed Trinity is unalterable, being ordered in all things and ſure. All the ſubjects of its grace ſhall infallibly be ſaved, according to our Lord's promiſe, and according to our Lord's prayer, viz. "My ſheep hear my voice, "and I know them, and they follow me, and I "give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall

" never perish, neither shall any pluck them out " of my hand." Trusting to these immutable securities the heirs of promise are commanded to draw strong consolation, even to rejoice in Jesus with a fulness of joy; in darkness as well as walking in light—in winter as well as in summer—in adversity as well as in prosperity—in death as well as in life; because he has all power in heaven and earth to make good to them every covenant engagement. And he will do it; for the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and shall come to Sion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away for ever.

O thou most blessed God and Saviour, thou art the Lord our righteousness and our strength. I believe that the whole Israel of God shall be justified ONLY by thee, and in thee ONLY shall they glory. O let thy Spirit abide with me to increase in me this faith, that by fresh supplies of his grace I may be kept from going about to establish my own righteousness, and may constantly submit myself to the righteousness of God. And by the same grace help me to bring forth the fruits of righteousness abundantly unto the glory and praise of God, magnifying thine atonement in the peace of my conscience, exalting thy righteousness in the love of my heart,

and

and in my walk and warfare glorifying thy fulneſs: So that out of it I may be receiving a ſufficiency of grace, by which I am now enabled to bleſs thee for the hope of glory. To thee, almighty Jeſus, for the work of righteouſneſs, which is peace, and for the effect of righteouſneſs, which is quietneſs and aſſurance for ever: To thee be everlaſting praiſe. Amen, and Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The believer's triumph in Jesus under a sense of the defilement of sin.

IT is in virtue of this fellowship with Jesus, that believers are freely forgiven all their iniquities. His atonement was the work of our great High Priest, who was made sin for us, although he knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. God is of purer eyes than to look upon the least iniquity: And there is a defilement in sin, which makes it exceeding filthy and abominable in his sight. He shewed his utter abhorrence of it by establishing in the Old Testament such an abundance of legal pollutions, as might exhibit to sense the defiling nature of sin, and might keep it ever before their eyes, and fresh upon their minds. And by making it necessary, that the worshippers should be purified from these pollutions, and by establishing the means of their purification, and by forbidding every other, he would lead them to exercise faith in the great purifier, whose office it was to purge their consciences, before they could offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. And it was a fixed law, That if any one legally unclean neglected or refused the appointed means of

of being cleanſed, he was to bear his iniquity: For an unpardoned ſinner can have no communion with a moſt holy God.

Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conſcience is defiled. The mind is the fountain from whence all the ſtreams flow. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, &c. theſe are the things which defile the man. An enlightened conſcience is made ſenſible of this, and feels the neceſſity of being purified from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, in order to approach God, and to have boldneſs and acceſs with confidence to the throne of grace. His meditations at ſuch times are like theſe.

The more I know of myſelf, the more I am led to loath myſelf, and to repent in duſt and aſhes: For I am a ſinner, filthy and abominable altogether. By nature as vile as ſin can render a fallen creature, and daily polluting myſelf in heart and life with freſh impurities. I have no means of cleanſing myſelf: No hope, that any thing in the creation can do it for me. Deep in my very conſtitution the ſtain remains. And I am forced to be crying out--Unclean, unclean. My caſe would be quite deſperate, if God himſelf had not provided a remedy, the report of which has come to mine ears in the goſpel. O it is bleſſed news. I welcome it to my heart: That God has

has opened a fountain, which cleanſeth from all ſin. He has recommended it to me, as having infinite virtue and everlaſting efficacy to cleanſe. And I have a command from heaven, vile and filthy as I am, to make uſe of it: For thus it is written—" In that day there ſhall be a foun-" tain opened to the houſe of David, and to the " inhabitants of Jeruſalem, for ſin and for un-" cleanneſs." When the Holy Spirit enables the ſinner to believe the report, and to mix faith with it, then he has a warrant thus to pray---" Purge me with hyſſop, and I ſhall be clean; " waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter than ſnow--- " Hide thy face from my ſins, and blot out all " mine iniquities---Create in me a clean heart, " O God, and renew a right ſpirit within me." And the Lord hears and anſwers the prayer in theſe words--" I will ſprinkle clean water upon " you, and ye ſhall be clean; from all your filthi-" neſs and from all your idols will I cleanſe you: " A new heart alſo will I give you, and a new " ſpirit will I put within you, and I will take " away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I " will give you a heart of fleſh: And I will put " my Spirit within you, and I will cauſe you to " walk in my ſtatutes, and ye ſhall keep my " judgments and do them: I will alſo ſave you " from all your uncleanneſſes." The ſacrifices from the beginning preached this bleſſed doctrine: Their blood could ſanctify by divine appointment

pointment to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, to purify the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Blessed, for ever blessed be his grace, who by this offering hath opened a fountain for sin and for uncleanness, in which the most polluted may wash and be clean: For Christ so loved the church as to give himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it might be holy and without blemish: For his blood has infinite virtue to purify the foulest sinner, even so to cleanse him, that he may be perfect for ever: And the great use of faith is to receive it, and to apply it, even as God himself as recommended it, and it has lost none of its virtue. To this very day, it purifies as perfectly as ever it did, and believers now in life, and in the hour of death, feel its divine efficacy, as truly as the martyred Stephen did. I find a dying Christian thus proclaiming his faith and hope in it, when heart and flesh were failing him. "Am not I, my friends, a monument of God's rich free grace, of his boundless love and mercy in Christ? O most extensive is the efficacy of his precious blood: For it has reached to me, one of the vilest of sinners: O here is bound-

leſs goodneſs, unfathomable love: This blood has waſhed clean my ſoul, the ſeat of defilement, that was as black as hell; purified my conſcience, that was darker than the grave, and made it brighter than the light; in a word, this blood will make me, who was vile, moſt vile, a child of hell, an heir of wrath, holy before God, and fit to live with God, and the Lamb, with angels, and the ſpirits of good men made perfect, to all eternity, and in a few minutes my ſoul ſhall be made perfect alſo. O bleſſed, for ever bleſſed be God my Saviour; Eternal praiſes be rendered unto thee." This is true faith, and high honour put upon the blood of Jeſus, to ſeal God's teſtimony concerning it. He hath ſet forth Jeſus Chriſt to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. Truſting to it, the fouleſt ſins are waſhed as white as ſnow, and crimſon ſins as the pureſt wool. So the beloved ſays to his church—" Be-" hold, thou art fair, my love: Behold thou art " all fair, there is no ſpot in thee: Thou art all " glorious within." No angel can be whiter or purer, or ſtand more accepted before God than he does who is waſhed in the blood of the Lamb. O bleſſed man who haſt obtained redemption by it! Thou art commanded to enter with boldneſs into the Holieſt by the blood of Jeſus—the way is open; thou art called to draw near with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith, having thy heart

heart ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and thy body waſhed with pure water, that thou mayeſt hold thy profeſſion of faith without wavering, as that great multitude did, who waſhed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; they are now crying with a loud voice, "Salvation to our God who ſitteth upon "the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever." They triumph indeed: And ſo mayeſt thou. Thou haſt the ſame reaſon as they have. The ſame fountain, which waſhed their robes, cleanſes thine. The ſame promiſes that it will, and thou ſhalt ſtand before God without ſpot of ſin unto eternal ſalvation, as perfect as they. Jeſus is thy Saviour, as truly as he is theirs: Even to-day thy conſcience purged from guilt, and thy heart purified by faith, thou mayeſt enter within the vail, and make ſweet melody in thy heart unto the Lord thy God. Our elder brethren round his throne are employed in the ſame delightful work: We do it here as well as we can: They in heaven, and we on earth. The ſame ſubject in the church below, as well as above, and the ſame employment. We try to ſing the praiſes of the worthy ſlaughtered Lamb in as high a note as they do. And when we fail we try again, praying the Holy Spirit to enable us to keep in tune with them, that our ſongs may daily be more ſpiritual and heavenly. A poet of our

our own, feeling ſomething of this harmony, would have us to celebrate the triumphs of the Lamb of God, in theſe words:

There is a fountain fill'd with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And ſinner's plung'd beneath that flood,
Loſe all their guilty ſtains.

The dying thief rejoic'd to ſee
That fountain in his day;
And there have I, as vile as he,
Waſh'd all my ſins away.

Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never loſe its power,
Till all the ranſom'd church of God
Be ſav'd to ſin no more.

E'er ſince by faith I ſaw the ſtream
Thy flowing wounds ſupply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And ſhall be till I die.

Then in a nobler ſweeter ſong
I'll ſing thy power to ſave,
When this poor liſping ſtamm'ring tongue
Lies ſilent in the grave.

The ſong of heaven is upon this ſame ſubject. The holy Ghoſt has taught us the very words of their divine hymn, and what is the harmony of all the redeemed round the throne with one heart and one voice, bleſſing God and the Lamb:

O that he may tune our hearts to join the chorus, and fit us now to ſing in as high a ſtrain as we can, and every day to aim higher, till we come to the completion of the heavenly viſion thus deſcribed by the apoſtle.

"After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, whom no one could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, ſtood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands: Theſe are they who came out of great tribulation, and have waſhed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: Therefore are they before the throne of God, and ſerve him day and night in his temple; and he that ſitteth upon the throne ſhall dwell among them. They ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more, neither ſhall the ſun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb, who is in the midſt of the throne, ſhall feed them, and ſhall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes: And they ſung with a loud voice, ſaying—"Salvation to our God, who ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever"--Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and prieſts unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The believer's triumph over ſin in its guilt.

THE forgiveneſs of ſins is the grand doctrine of ſalvation, on which peace with God is built. Sin is preſent with the believer, but pardoned. Sin is felt, but ceaſes to condemn. This is the chief difficulty in experience. How the truth of God, and his holineſs, and his threatenings, and the honor of his law can be maintained, and yet he can be faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins. The believer may be often ſhaken in his mind, and troubled with legal fears and workings, if he be not ſo well eſtabliſhed by the Spirit, and word of God, as to ſubmit in his conſcience to God's way of pardoning ſin: It was always one and the ſame, contrived and appointed in the everlaſting councils of the bleſſed Trinity, and revealed upon the entrance of ſin, viz. that a perſon in Jehovah would become incarnate, and take away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf. To him Moſes and all the prophets give witneſs, that through his name, whoſoever believeth in him ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins. The proclamation of grace holds it out moſt clearly. When

Moſes was permitted to ſee his glory, the Lord paſſed by before him, and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth: Keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity and tranſgreſſion and ſin." Every ſacrifice preached this ſame truth viſibly, ſhewing the death which the ſinner deſerved, and the divine method of pardoning it, through faith in the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world: For Jeſus is the very paſchal Lamb who was ſacrificed for us: And the deliverance which they experienced in Egypt, through the ſprinkling of his blood, we feel the ſame in our hearts unto this day: Through faith they kept the paſſover, and the ſprinkling of blood, leaſt he that deſtroyed the firſt-born ſhould touch them: Through the ſame faith we keep the ſame feaſt, and having found redemption through his blood, even the forgiveneſs of ſins, we live ſafe out of the reach of the deſtroyer. We know our danger as they did, and we look to the Lamb of God for ſafety. It is the Holy Spirit who convinces both of ſin and of pardon. His conviction of ſin makes an impreſſion upon the conſcience of its infinite evil. He ſtops the ſinner's mouth, and makes him ſubſcribe to all that is ſaid in ſcripture of his guilt, and of his danger. Looking at himſelf under the law, and

under ſin, which is the tranſgreſſion of the law, he is made to ſubmit to the ſentence of condemnation, and has nothing of his own to plead in arreſt of judgment. Thus he is taught to think of the law, as God does, both of its precepts and penalties. He ſees infinite juſtice, and holineſs, and truth, armed againſt him, and the deſert of his ſins to be everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, which he has no power to reſiſt, and no means to eſcape. When the Holy Spirit convinces him of righteouſneſs, and manifeſts the grace of God, in the free forgiveneſs of his ſins, yet ſtill he feels the exceeding wickedneſs of them. He loaths and abhors himſelf, as the ſubject of them, and groans, being burthened with the abiding ſenſe of his corruptions. At his very beſt it is--O wretched man, who ſhall deliver me, &c. but at the ſame time he can rejoice in God his Saviour--I thank God through Jeſus Chriſt--He is the propitiation for my ſins, and I have found peace with God through faith in his blood. Thus the Holy Spirit glorifies Jeſus. He gives a faith ſtedfaſt in the atonement of Jeſus, and ſettles ſuch a peace in the conſcience, as anſwers all charges from ſin and from unbelief. And hereby he fulfils the proclamation of grace in the New Teſtament, which agrees exactly with the ſentiments of the Old. When our Lord ſent out his apoſtles to preach the goſpel to every creature, his commiſſion to them runs in

theſe words. " And Jeſus ſaid unto them, Thus " it is written, and thus it behoved Chriſt to " ſuffer, and to riſe from the dead on the third " day: And that repentance, and remiſſion of " ſins ſhould be preached in his name among all " nations." They were to warn ſinners of their danger, and to call upon them to look to Jeſus, and to him only, for ſalvation. For he, who commandeth all men every where to repent, hath exalted Jeſus to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto his people, and forgiveneſs of their ſins. It is a gift of his royal grace. One of the high honors of his exaltation ---that he can freely forgive every iniquity, and tranſgreſſion, and ſin, be they ever ſo many, or ever ſo great. For Jeſus can take away all iniquity, and receive the ſinner graciouſly.---We, ſays Peter, are witneſſes of theſe things: And ſo alſo is the Holy Ghoſt; whom God hath given to them that obey him---that come at his call in the goſpel, and obey it: The Holy Ghoſt turning them from ſelf to Chriſt, from ſin to righteouſneſs, from a life of ſenſe to a life of faith, thereby witneſſes their true converſion, which is a continual work of his grace in that repentance which is not to be repented of, and when he enables them to glorify God for this mercy he gives great joy and peace in believing the forgiveneſs of their ſins: According to the commiſſion which our Lord gave to St. Paul

Paul at his converſion, " I ſend thee to the Gen-
" tiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them
" from darkneſs to light, and from the power of
" Satan unto God, that they may receive for-
" giveneſs of ſins, and an inheritance among
" them that are ſanctified by faith that is in me."
When this commiſſion is opened to a ſinner in his name, and credited by the power of his Spirit, then the conſcience is purged from guilt, by that one offering, which perfecteth for ever. The believer in it has a clean heart given him. It is ſanctified, and made a temple for the worſhip of the true God. To this the word witneſſes--And the Holy Ghoſt is alſo a witneſs to him, that he may now enter with boldneſs into the holieſt of all by the blood of Jeſus--Every poſſible hinderance being removed, he may have acceſs with confidence to the throne of grace--to a Father of mercies, loving him, and bleſſing him with all ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus. When he lives up to theſe privileges, then he feels as he ought to do. His faith relying ſtedfaſtly upon the divine promiſes, and giving full credit to a faithful God, he has a good conſcience purged from dead works to ſerve the living God, and his heart conſecrated for this ſervice, he may ſing of pardon and peace in as high a note of praiſe, and with as much ſpiritual joy, as ever any believer experienced. They had much in the Old Teſtament, when they ſung the triumphs of the

Lamb

Lamb of God in the twentieth Pſalm. The argument of which is thus given us in Biſhop Horne's Comment. "1--4. The church prayeth for the proſperity of King Meſſiah, going forth to the battle as her champion and deliverer. For his acceptance by the Father, and for the accompliſhment of his will;--5, 6, 7. She declareth her full aſſurance of faith, and her reſolution to truſt in him alone, and not in the arm of fleſh;--8. She foreſeeth the fall of her enemies, and her own exaltation; and 9. concludeth with a prayer to the God of her ſtrength." As long as the temple ſtood, and the ſervice of God was regularly carried on in it, the true worſhippers had every day a ſolemn commemoration of that ſacrifice, which was to put away their ſins. They were taught to look to that precious blood of Chriſt, as of a lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, whom God had ſet forth in every ſacrifice to be the great propitiation and atonement; through which alone they were to expect pardon and peace. While the lamb was burning on the altar every morning and evening, they celebrated his praiſes with the choiceſt inſtruments of muſic, and with the ſweeteſt voices, making alſo melody in their hearts at the ſame time unto the Lord. Among other hymns given by inſpiration of God for this joyful occaſion, they uſed to ſing the twentieth Pſalm,

in

in which they triumphed in the God of their ſalvation, and declareth their faith and hope in him in full concert, after this manner---

" Jehovah will hear thee in the day of trouble the name of the God of Jacob will defend thee: He will ſend thee help from his ſanctuary, and he will ſtrengthen thee out of Sion: He will grant thee according to thy heart, and he will fulfil all thy purpoſes: Then we ſhall ſhout for joy in thy ſalvation, and in the name of our God we ſhall ſet up our banners, when Jehovah ſhall fulfil all thy requeſts. Now I have known, that Jehovah will help the Meſſiah, his Chriſt, and will anſwer him from his ſanctuary with the mighty power of the right hand of Jeſus. Some put their truſt in chariots, and others in horſes, but we will cauſe the name of Jehovah our Alehim, (the Trinity in covenant) to be remembered: They are brought down and fallen, but we are riſen, and made ſtill to ſtand ſafe: For the King (Jeſus) will put forth his power to ſave us: He will anſwer us in the day when we pray unto him."

Theſe are the words of the hymn: In which they expreſs their faith in the future triumphs of the Lamb of God, and their hope in that one offering of his which was to perfect them for ever. The divine appointment, the divine acceptance, the divine application of his ſacrifice, is the moſt noble ſubject, that could be ſung upon

upon earth: Indeed it is the ſubject of heaven, and will be the harmony and concert of eternity. May the Holy Ghoſt put our hearts in tune to join in it, and to adore and to bleſs the Lamb that was ſlain, ſetting up our banners as they did, Rom. viii. 31, 32, 33, 34. conquerors over ſin and Satan, and all their enemies. We have the ſame Jeſus to rojoice in, and as good reaſon as ever believers had, to rejoice in him with a fulneſs of joy. When the heart feels as happy as it can be here in God the Saviour, theſe are ſome of the delightful exerciſes of faith in his blood---

O, what am I, that ſuch a ſinner as I am ſhould be thus highly favoured! A child of wrath by nature, even as others, and by practice ---having ſinned long with greedineſs--againſt light and conviction---ſinning and ſorrowing---ſorrowing and ſinning from year to year---a ſlave to the luſt of the fleſh, to the luſt of the eyes, and to the pride of life, every moment fit and ripe for hell. O what a monument of infinite patience and long-ſuffering---ſpared from day to day, and at laſt called to the ſaving knowledge of Jeſus. O what exceeding riches of grace are theſe---that the Father would chooſe me in the Beloved, and give him to ſave me from ſin and miſery: That he would ſend his Spirit to quicken me, and to enable me to believe, that there was mercy in Jeſus for me, even for me, and plenteous redemption. What ſinner can be more indebted

debted than I am, for ſuch miracles of grace. Glory be to God, in the higheſt. My Lord Jeſus, the great God and my Saviour, gave himſelf for me, that he might redeem me from all iniquity, and might cleanſe me from all ſin: Truſting to his atonement, and to his righteouſneſs, I am led to admire the Father's full abſolution; "Thy ſins and thine iniquities I will remember no more." Thanks be to him for this unſpeakable gift. He has pronounced them bleſſed, and he has cauſed me to feel ſome of their bleſſedneſs, whoſe iniquities he has forgiven, and whoſe ſin he has covered; And therefore I look forward with thankfulneſs to the great day of redemption, when Jeſus will preſent me to himſelf, holy and without blemiſh as if I had never ſinned. In this hope of ſalvation I triumph before God. Now I ſee the felicity of thy choſen --I rejoice in the gladneſs of thy people---and I glory with thine inheritance. Unto him, who choſe me in his Son--Unto him, who loved me and waſhed me from my ſins in his own blood--Unto him, who gave me this faith and keeps me in it; For this fellowſhip with the eternal Three, be eternal praiſe. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The believer's victory over the dominion of sin.

WE have heard from scripture some of the victories of faith over sin in its pollution and in its guilt: But there is still a hard warfare to be maintained against its dominion: For it reigneth absolutely in the children of disobedience, and it never ceaseth to strive for mastery in the children of God; who have an evil nature still—an old man, who is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and who is to be put off every day—denied in his desires—mortified in his affections, and crucified in his appetites. Thus the commandment runs, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon earth." And the new man, who is called to this warfare, is ordered to make use of Christ's fulness for promised courage, and strength, and victory: For without Christ he can do nothing. Sin is himself--He is a body of sin: And he has not only to fight against himself, but also against principalities and powers, hosts of foes, united under the banner of the God of this world, trying all their cunning, and all their force to bring the believer back into the bondage of corruption; and what he has of his own is on their side.

His

His worſt foe is his indwelling ſin, which has a complete body with all its members and luſts, always enticing to ſomething unlawful, and tempting to the commiſſion of it. Every faculty is ready to become an inſtrument of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin. It is an abſolute tyrant, who rules his ſlaves with the moſt cruel rigour, keeping them captive to his will, although nothing but deſtruction and miſery be in their ways.

Thus original ſin is deſcribed in the ninth article of our church---it is the fault and corruption of every man born of Adam: And notwithſtanding it ſtill remaineth in the regenerate, yet there is a promiſe of daily and of complete victory over the tyrant. Thus it is written, "Sin ſhall not have dominion over you, becauſe ye are not under the law, but under grace." Once ſin had full dominion, but it is taken away by the Spirit of Chriſt; not entirely deſtroyed, as to its being, but as to its ruling power--Dethroned in the judgment, there ſeen as it is exceeding ſinful, exceeding dangerous—Dethroned in the conſcience, the believer no longer under the law, but under grace, is freed from condemnation—Dethroned in the will: Not my will, Lord, but thine be done—Dethroned in the heart, I hate all evil thoughts, but thy law do I love; O what love have I unto thy law—Dethroned in the life, crucified with its affections and luſts, by the power of the croſs of Jeſus. It is not quite dead, but

but it is put to a lingering death, kept upon the croſs, dying daily. And thus the ſin, whic is pardoned through the blood of Chriſt, is conquered by the arm of Chriſt, as it is written, "He will ſubdue our iniquities," and faith in his promiſed help keeps them under, ſubdues them effectually, ſo that they do not reign in the mortal body to obey them in the luſts thereof. Take an inſtance of this triumphant faith. Whatever the natural man can ſet his heart upon, or ſeek his happineſs in—the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, or the pride of life—Moſes was enabled by the Spirit of Chriſt to overcome: "By faith, Moſes, when he was come to years, refuſed to be called the ſon of Pharaoh's daughter, chooſing rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, eſteeming the reproach of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures of Egypt: For he had reſpect unto the recompence of the reward." What but almighty grace could have given him ſuch a complete victory? He gained entire dominion over ſin, even when it came to tempt him with all the pleaſures, and riches, and honors of the world. He was made ſtrong in faith: Chriſt ruling in his heart brought every high thought into ſubjection to himſelf: So that Moſes not only reſigned all his temporal advantages for Chriſt's ſake, but what natural men account a great paradox, he choſe re-

proach, poverty, misery, rather than give up his interest in Christ. This is the victory which still overcometh the world, even our faith: For the New Testament furnishes us with such another instance of Christian heroism in the apostle of the Gentiles. He is giving an account of his own experience, and by what means he was now no longer under the law, but under grace--a sinner saved from the sentence of the broken law, and from all hope of being made righteous by his own personal keeping of it: I, through the law, says he, am dead to the law, that I might live unto God, &c. Once he was alive without the law, when he thought proudly of his own good life, that concerning the law he was blameless, but when the commandment came in the power of the Spirit, then it slew him, and killed all his former legal hopes. What he had trusted in before for life, he now found to be unto death. And Christ, faith in Christ, was the only means by which he saw he could live unto God, by his grace and to his glory. By this faith he then experienced the power of the crucified and risen Jesus: I am in Christ, says he, crucified with him, truly and spiritually dead to sin, to self, to the world, by the virtue of his cross: Nevertheless by the same faith in the same Jesus, I live, the Spirit of life in him has quickened my spirit: He has given me a new birth into the spiritual world, and has brought me to live upon the fulness

fulneſs of Jeſus, as really now by faith, as I hope to live upon him by ſenſe in heaven; "Yet not I," I neither had it of myſelf, nor do I continue it by any act of my own, "but Chriſt liveth in me:" And although I ſeem to live outwardly like other men, yet the life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, depending upon him every moment for freſh ſupplies of his Spirit, to keep me in union and communion with the Father and the Son, and thereby he gives me to feel in my heart ſome of the bleſſings of that love of God in Chriſt, which ſurpaſſeth knowledge. It is this that purifies my ſoul, and ſanctifies my life: Bleſſed, for ever bleſſed be his name, who thus loved me, and gave himſelf for me.

Such were the heroes of chriſtianity. They fought the Lord's battles, and in the power of his might they ſubdued ſin: They obtained dominion over it through faith in Jeſus. And the ſame faith in the ſame Jeſus is ſtill mighty through him to obtain as great victories. The truth of his promiſe, the faithfulneſs of the promiſer, the ſtrength of his arm to fulfill his promiſe; theſe did not fail Moſes, nor Paul—never did---never can fail any believer. Thus ſpeaketh the Lord unto them---Sin ſhall not have dominion over you---having pardoned it by my blood. I will ſubdue it by my Spirit: Truſt me, you ſhall find ſtrong faith an overmatch for ſtrong ſin:

ſin: Becauſe it fights in the ſtrength of Jeſus, to whom all things are poſſible, and who muſt reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. And ſin and death ſhall be no more. Say, it is a beſetting ſin, this only gives more employment for faith, and for the power of Jeſus. It may be a ſin of conſtitution, breaking out into wrath and paſſion, that the man has no government of himſelf: But the Spirit of Chriſt can make him a new creature, and can enable him to put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. It may be a long habit of ſin: But is any thing too hard for the Lord? Has he not promiſed---" A new heart will I give you, and I will put my Spirit within you, and I will cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes, and ye ſhall keep my commandments and practiſe them." Wherever grace reigns, this ſcripture is fulfilled. The armies of the Lord of hoſts fight under his banner, and no weapon formed againſt them can proſper---Kept by his mighty power they are daily more than conquerors, marching on triumphant over all oppoſition: For he enables them to hold faſt the confidence, and the rejoicing of hope firm unto the end. Thus they were commanded to pray---" Order my ſteps, O Lord, according to thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me." They looked to his word, and to his

arm, for the right ordering of their ſteps, believing that he would keep the ſteps of his ſaints, and ſin ſhould not have dominion over them, now they were no longer under the law, but under the kingdom of his grace. The victory which he had promiſed, they expected, and he did put forth his power, according to that good word wherein he had cauſed them to place their truſt. They found his grace ſufficient to ſubdue the tyranny of iniquity; yea, where ſin had abounded grace did much more abound in daily victory over its wiles, and its aſſaults. And the power of Chriſt reſting upon them, they were kept in this ſpirit of prayer.

O thou God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſtrengthen me mightily by thy Spirit in the inner man, that Chriſt may dwell in my heart by faith, and I may have his ſtrength, to ſet againſt the power of my ſins, and mine enemies. For orders, for courage, for perſeverance, for victory, for eternal triumph, I look unto thee for all. Bleſſed be thy name, that thou haſt choſen me to be a ſoldier, and to fight under the banner of Jeſus. I will ſing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed glorioufly. He made all mine enemies his own, and they are now under his feet; and I believe according to thy good word, that thou wilt put them under mine. Thou haſt conquered them for me, and haſt engaged to conquer them in me, and by me. It is of thy mere grace, almighty

almighty Jeſus, that I am enabled to deny myſelf, to take up my croſs, and to follow thee in this holy war. All my ſufficiency is from the freſh ſupplies of thy Spirit. O grant me then abundantly to the increaſe of my faith, and to the praiſe of thy promiſed help. Cauſe me to depend every moment upon it, let me experience, that when I am weakeſt in myſelf, I may be made ſtrongeſt in the Lord. And when I have nothing left me to glory in of mine own, then my ſoul may magnify the Lord, and my Spirit may rejoice in God my Saviour. Behold, God is my ſalvation, I will truſt and not be afraid, becauſe the Lord Jehovah is my ſtrength and my ſong: He alſo is become my ſalvation. To his grace and power be all the glory for ever and ever. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

CHAP. VII.

The believer's triumph over his troubles.

AFTER ſin is pardoned, and the pardoned ſinner is enabled to fight the good fight of faith againſt it, yet there is another enemy aſſaulting him to the laſt moment of his life. Fallen man is born to trouble. The man in Chriſt is ſo far from being exempt, that many are the troubles of the righteous. He is in common with others, liable to pain and poverty, and to afflictions of every kind: He is by his very profeſſion expoſed to ſome of the moſt trying nature---his owning Chriſt---his following Chriſt---his conformity to Chriſt---give offence, provoke the malice of wicked men, and the rage of wicked ſpirits. Wave does not follow wave more certainly, than every day brings its freſh troubles, and forces the believer to ſeek for aids, and comforts out of himſelf. This is a ſore fight of afflictions. To bear up under them with any patience, and to reap profit from them, is a taſk above the power of mere man. Every little pain ſtirs up murmuring and impatience, and this rebellion againſt God's will is the parent of a thouſand fretful tempers: And theſe, exerciſed by ſharp ſuffering, render the man truly miſerable. If his ſuffering continues long, increaſes

creaſes much, it often drives the poor ſinner to deſpair; and if he has no Saviour to flee unto, he is ſometimes guilty of ſelf-murder, and dies in an act of ſin, ruſhing head-long into everlaſting deſtruction---The wiſdom of man, of Cato himſelf, furniſhing no better remedy againſt the numerous evils of human life.

To man thus expoſed to ſuffering, and helpleſs under it, his ſuffering remaining as long as ſin remains, how neceſſary muſt be the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt? He has vouchſafed to give us his promiſes of help, ſuited to every poſſible caſe of diſtreſs. When it is his will, that any of his people ſhould be tried, he engages to make the trial of their faith much more precious than that of gold, which periſheth. He is with them, preſent with his divine ſupports and holy comforts. "Call upon me, ſays he, in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorify me: Many are the troubles of the righteous, but out of them all the Lord delivereth them." They acknowledge it with gratitude, "God was our refuge and ſtrength, we have found him a very preſent help in trouble," helping us to bear up under the heavieſt preſſures, keeping his everlaſting arms underneath us, as long as we ſuffer, and if the ſufferings increaſe, increaſing our faith and patience, until they have done their perfect work.

When

When through the aids of his Spirit theſe promiſes have their full credit, through his inward peace, which he alone can give, and which the world cannot take away: When he makes the heart to feel happy in God, enjoying the peculiar ſupports of the goſpel, and living up to its privileges, then the believer finds the apoſtle's experience to be true---"always ſorrowful, yet always rejoicing," and ſometimes with a fulneſs of joy, according to what is written, "But now, thus ſaith the Lord, that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Iſrael, *Fear not*, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine: When thou paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they ſhall not overflow thee; when thov walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the flames kindle upon thee: For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Iſrael thy Saviour: *Fear not*, for I am with thee," to ſupport, to deliver. This is ſpoken to the redeemed, who are God's property, and whom he bought with a great price. What could the Lord God engage to do for them more, than is here promiſed, in order to ſtill all their guilty fears, and to quiet all their natural fears? Truſting to the redemption that is in the blood of the Lamb, they are under his keeping, they go out in his ſtrength to meet their trials and their

their enemies. Jesus is with them, on their side; and therefore believing in him, they need not fear any suffering. Jehovah is their Alehim, their covenant God in Trinity, their sworn allies, engaged by his almighty arm to save them from all evil, and to give them all possible good. "I the Lord, says he, do keep thee---I will water thee with the dew of heaven every moment---lest any hurt thee, I will keep thee night and day." Having such great and exceeding precious promises, with what holy courage should the believer look up to a faithful God, and what strong consolation should they afford him, when he is to go through the fire or through the water. He may sing with Jonah, "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving---salvation is of the Lord." Or with the triumphant faith of the three children who were not afraid to go into the furnace, heated seven times hotter than usual, fully persuaded, that whether they lived or died Jesus would be with them. Threatened with the burning fiery furnace, if they refused to worship Nebuchadnezzar's image, "They said, O king, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter; if it be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king." And he did, he went with them into the fire, and they walked in the midst of the flames unhurt. The same Jesus is daily repeating the

the ſame miracle. He has approved himſelf in all ages to be the friend of his afflicted people: Whatever he ſends to them, he ſends it with his bleſſing. So they teſtify---"We know that ALL things work together for good to them that love God." They knew it by his promiſe, and they felt it by experience: It is good for us that we have been in trouble: We have gone through many ſeas and ſtorms of affliction, and through the raging fire of perſecution, not only unhurt, but benefited: For Chriſt was with us. As the ſufferings of Chriſt abounded; ſo our conſolation abounded by Chriſt: He feels for them, as his members, and has bowels of the tendereſt compaſſion. In all their affliction he is afflicted. He brings in his ſupports, and comes with his deliverance in the beſt time. He leaves no accuſation of ſin in the conſcience, but gives and maintains a ſweet peace with God. O what matter of triumph is it, when this peace rules in the heart, always, and by all means teſtifying---"Since God is for us, who can be againſt us? He that ſpared not his own ſon, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things? Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea, rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us." Thanks without

ceaſing

ceaſing be to Jeſus, the Lamb that was ſlain for this complete and eternal victory over ſin: The apoſtle carries on his praiſes, *Rom.* viii. that through Jeſus all outward oppoſition ſhall fall before us—"Who ſhall ſeparate us from Chriſt's love to us? Shall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? As it is written, For thy ſake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as ſheep for the ſlaughter: Nay, in all theſe things we are more than conquerors through him that hath loved us." His love is in them all---appoints them, ſends them, proportions them, and they conquer them all in his ſtrength, not only conquer, but are more than conquerors: They are great gainers; they gain what is better than all the world, freſh proof of his love, they gain experience of it: For they find that nothing can hurt them, now he has taken them under his protection. For this his divine ſupport we are taught to pray daily, aſking it as a matter of mere favour, and expecting it only through the grace and interceſſion of our great High Prieſt--

We humbly beſeech thee, O Father, mercifully to look upon our infirmities, and for the glory of thy name turn from us all thoſe evils which we moſt righteouſly have deſerved, and grant that in all our troubles we may put our whole truſt and confidence in thy mercy, and evermore ſerve thee in holineſs, and pureneſs of living,

living, to thy honour and glory, through our only mediator and advocate Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

When this is the prayer of faith, outward trials become inward mercies: For the Holy Spirit keeps the heart ſettled with its whole truſt and confidence upon his promiſed help: So that if the trials increaſe, he makes them redound to the glory of God. If the outward man be a greater ſufferer, even ready to periſh, he renews the inward man day by day: He brings in abundant grace to ſanctify abundant ſufferings: Whereby he ſatisfies the hearts of the ſufferers, that theſe light afflictions which are but for a moment, will work for them a far more excellent and eternal weight of glory. The hope of this keeps them patient and thankful. By the power of the Holy Ghoſt, they know this eternal triumph will be ſoon. Yet a very, very little while, they will be favoured with the ſight of the king in his beauty: They ſhall ſit down with him in his throne, and ſhall reign with him for ever and ever.

For the farther confirmation of our faith, he has ſet before us a cloud of witneſſes, who teſtify, with one voice, that he ſanctified all their troubles, and turned them into covenant bleſſings. So one of them ſaid—"I will bleſs the Lord at all times, his praiſe ſhall continually be in my mouth: My ſoul ſhall make her boaſt in the Lord,

Lord, the humble ſhall hear thereof and be glad: O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together: I ſought the Lord, and he heard, and delivered me from all my fears. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles." Their very troubles become matter of triumph. He ſhut them up in the ark, and they were ſaved, when he drowned the world of the ungodly. Peter ſpeaking from experience ſays, The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of their troubles, as he did righteous Lot, when he overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. The more the Egyptians oppreſſed his people, the more they multiplied and grew. Behold, the buſh burned with fire, and the buſh was not conſumed. The fire of perſecution raged againſt the church, but the blood of the martyrs was fruitful, and increaſed it both in number and in grace. The ſeed of the wicked one have been at enmity with the children of the promiſe from the beginning, but theſe truſted in the Captain of their ſalvation, and he led them on conquering and to conquer: "Through faith they ſubdued kingdoms, wrought righteouſneſs, obtained promiſes, ſtopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, eſcaped the edge of the ſword, out of weakneſs were made ſtrong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, women received their dead raiſed to life again, and others were

tortured not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better reſurrection"---theſe and the other worthies mentioned, *Hebrews*, chap. xi. did wonders through Chriſt, who ſtrengthened them: They loved not their lives unto death, fully perſuaded, that when he ſhould call them to it, he would be with them, and would enable them to finiſh their courſe with joy. And he did: For they all obtained a good report through faith, leaving us an example to follow the ſteps of their faith, and encouraging us to do it with holy boldneſs, whatever troubles we meet with in our way. We may, we ought to rejoice in tribulation: For we have the ſame Jeſus to look unto, the author and the finiſher of their faith and ours, the ſame promiſes of his ſupport, the ſame almighty arm to make them good, and the ſame matter of triumph, which they experienced, whom he led on from ſtrength to ſtrength, until every one of them in Sion appeared before God. This is the certain heritage of the ſervants of the Lord, and their righteouſneſs and ſalvation is of me, ſaith the Lord.

Of the ſame ſentiments were our reformers, which they give us in theſe remarkable words in one of their prayers: O God, who art the author of peace, and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom ſtandeth our eternal life, whoſe ſervice is perfect freedom: Defend us thy humble ſervants in all aſſaults of our enemies, that we

we ſurely truſting in thy defence may not fear the power of any adverſaries, through the might of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, *Amen.*

And to the ſame purpoſe in one of their homilies they thus expreſs themſelves: "All correction which God ſendeth us in this preſent time, ſeemeth to have no joy and comfort, but ſorrow and pain, yet it bringeth with it a taſte of God's mercy, and goodneſs, towards them that be ſo corrected, and a ſure hope of God's everlaſting conſolation in heaven. If then theſe ſorrows, diſeaſes, and ſickneſſes, and alſo death itſelf, be nothing elſe but our heavenly Father's rod, whereby he certifieth us of his love, and gracious favour, whereby he trieth and purifieth us, whereby he giveth unto us holineſs, and certifieth us that we be his children, and he our merciful Father: Shall we not then with all humility, as obedient and loving children, joyfully kiſs our heavenly Father's rod, and ever ſay in our heart, with our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, Father, if this anguiſh and ſorrow which I feel, and death which I ſee approach, may not paſs, but that thy will is that I muſt ſuffer them, *thy will be done.*"

O thou hope of Iſrael, the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble, I acknowledge my reluctance to take up thy croſs, and my weakneſs in bearing it, hold thou me up by freſh ſupplies of thy Spirit, that I may be ſafe. Let thy ſtrength be perfected in my weakneſs. Thy promiſes of help are

exceeding great; through thee I do believe the truth of them, and I pray for grace to make a right uſe of them. Enable me in patience to poſſeſs my ſoul, that when it is thy will to try my faith, I may live up to my privileges, and may find it better to ſuffer with Chriſt than to reign with the world. O Lord, thou haſt ſhewed this favour to Moſes, and thou haſt done more than this---Thou haſt made thy witneſſes glorify thee in the fires--they have marched on, fighting thy battles againſt hoſts of foes, and they did not account their lives dear to themſelves, ſo they might finiſh their courſe with joy, and die in faith, bleſſing and praiſing thy holy name. O thou faithful God, thou art the ſame to us now, as thou waſt to them. Lead me on then in thy ſtrength, truſting in thy word, and leaning on thine arm. Thou haſt promiſed thy flock, and I hope I am one of them--"My ſheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand." O thou good Shepherd, let me truſt in thy love, and feel thy ſupports, that whatever lies before me to be done or ſuffered, I may be enabled to do it, and to ſuffer it by the continual ſupplies of thy Spirit. And by his influence help me to perſevere, till I win the prize of my high calling, and be admitted to join that great company, whom no one can number, who

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ſtand before the throne of God and the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands: Theſe are they who came out of great tribulation, and have waſhed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: Therefore are they before the throne of God, and ſerve him day and night in his temple, and he that ſitteth upon the throne ſhall dwell among them: They ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more, neither ſhall the ſun ſmite them, nor any heat: For the Lamb who is in the midſt of the throne ſhall feed them, and ſhall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes. O my Jeſus, I bleſs thee for this moſt glorious proſpect: It is of thy mere grace that I am in any meaſure enabled to join that great company: It is entirely of thy ſpecial favour that I have any good hope to come to their glory: For this, and for all thy mercies, to thee with the Father, and the eternal Spirit, the three in one Jehovah, I give honour, and glory, and thanks, to-day, and I hope to do it without ceaſing for ever and ever. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

The believer's triumph over the infirmities of old age.

IT is appointed unto all men once to die. The time is fixed by an immutable decree. The days of our years are threeſcore years and ten, and if by reaſon of ſtrength they be fourſcore years, yet is their ſtrength labour and ſorrow: For it is ſoon cut off, and we fly away. If ſome be permitted to live longer, yet the infirmities of old age muſt arrive, bringing with them labour and ſorrow, the forerunners of death. Circulation will become languid. The ſenſes of the body will grow dull and heavy. The faculties of the mind will be impaired, and will diſcover it by not remembering proper names. In this decline of life believers are ſubject to the ſame infirmities with other men: They have no exemption from pain, or ſickneſs, or death: But they have that which keeps up their ſpirits, and makes them patient and joyful. The conſolations of God are then moſt needed, and he has promiſed them, and he is faithful: He never failed them, who truſted in him. He has ſuited his promiſes to all the infirmities of age. He knows our frame perfectly, and has deſcribed it with an unerring pen, *Eccleſiaſtes*, chap. xii. that when we feel

feel the ſigns of old age, we may apply to him for grace to profit by them. The ſymptoms there given are infallibly true and juſt, and are as ſo many monitors, warning the man, that the vigour of life is declining, and that the body is returning to the earth from whence it came. Happy is he who takes this warning, and remembers his Creator in the days of his youth, before the weariſome days come, of weakneſs and pain. He has fled to Jeſus for refuge--and finds and experiences what he has engaged to do for his people, when heart and fleſh begin to fail them. Bleſſed be his grace for the abundant proviſion which he has made for their faith and patience: He ſays to them, "I will be with you, I will never leave you, nor forſake you: So that you may boldly ſay, The Lord is our helper, and we need not fear what the infirmities of age can do unto us." One of them, the Chriſtian Hero, thus encouraged himſelf in the Lord his God--"Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my truſt even from my youth: By thee have I been holden up from the womb: Thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: My praiſe ſhall be continually of thee---I am a wonder unto many, but thou art my ſtrong refuge." This was his truſt: And God did not forſake him. He remembered his word unto his ſervant, wherein he had cauſed him to depend. There failed not aught of any good thing, which the Lord had

ſpoken unto him. O what great encouragement have believers to follow the ſteps of his faith! For his God is their God, the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever, to young and old, who put their truſt in him. His promiſe to the Iſrael of God cannot be broken. Thus he pledges his word of truth to them, giving them a warrant to pray unto him, "My mouth ſhall be filled with thy praiſe, and with thy honour all the day long: For thou wilt not caſt me off in the time of old age, thou wilt not forſake me, when my ſtrength faileth." To this prayer the Lord inclined his ear, and vouchſafed this gracious anſwer: "Hearken unto me, O houſe of Jacob, and all the remnant of the houſe of Iſrael, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb, and even to your old age I am he, and even to hoary hairs will I carry you, I have made and I will bear you, even I will carry, and I will deliver you." Theſe are ſome of his rich cordials for the aged: He provided them in his love, and he is ſenſibly touched with the feeling of their infirmities in adminiſtering them: For he himſelf took our infirmities, and bare our ſickneſſes. His compaſſions bind him to comfort and relieve his old diſciples: And when they apply to him in time of need, he is ever preſent to grant them his promiſed help: Yea, ſo ſuited to their eaſe, as to make them grow in grace, as they grow in years. They

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bring forth fruit in their old age, the rich fruit of humility, and the ripe fruit of thankfulneſs; fruit that endureth unto everlaſting life. We have an happy inſtance of this in God's goodneſs to an antient believer, who lived to be an hundred and ſeventy-five years old. He was the friend of God, who had bleſſed Abraham through life, and that in all things, and who even to hoary hairs loaded him with bleſſings. For God had promiſed him, "Thou ſhalt go to thy fathers in peace, thou ſhalt be buried in a good old age;" and the ſacred hiſtorian relating the fulfilling of the promiſe, ſays, "He gave up the ghoſt, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people." His old age was good, in body and ſoul. Whatever infirmities he had, they were intended for good, and actually did him good. He was a very cheerful pleaſant old man. The peace of his mind had a ſweet influence on his temper and behaviour. It kept him from being fretful and peeviſh in his family. He was loving to his children, and kind to his ſervants: God himſelf being witneſs. He was alſo happy in his laſt years: For he ſpent them in faith, and when they came to an end, he died in peace; with his laſt breath he committed his ſpirit into the hands of him who had redeemed it, *full of years*: It is in the original one word—he was ſatisfied: So it is rendered, Pſalm xvii. 15, "As for me I

ſhall behold thy face in righteouſneſs: I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake up after thy likeneſs." He was ſatisfied with what he had enjoyed of the favour and friendſhip of his God; who had been his ſhield to defend him from all ſins and enemies, and alſo had promiſed to be his exceeding great reward: This he obtained, when he was gathered to his people, to the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, and to the moſt bliſsful communion of the Three in Jehovah. All the children of faithful Abraham, treading in the ſteps of his faith, have the ſame God to deal with, who keepeth promiſe for ever. It is recorded of Iſaac, the heir of the ſame promiſe with his father, that he died in the ſame faith, an old man. He was tried with many infirmities, but we read of no complaints, though he was an hundred and eighty years of age. He expired in praiſe and thankfulneſs, ſatisfied with life, and happy in the proſpect beyond death. And his ſon Jacob, an hundred and forty-ſeven years old when he was dying, declared that he had waited for the ſalvation of God; waiting faith is ſtrong faith: And after he had bleſſed his children, and had given commandment concerning his bones, he quietly, as if he had been going to ſleep, gathered up his feet into the bed, and died in peace, an old man, and ſatisfied. All theſe lived in the world, ſtrangers and pilgrims, looking for a city that hath

hath foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God: And they were not diſappointed of their hope, they all died in faith—in an act of faith, and were gathered to their people, to the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born. When they came to the end of their faith, they came to heaven. The moment they expired, they entered the city, which God had prepared for them: And their bodies, ſleeping in the duſt, are in the covenant of life, and ſhall be raiſed and glorified in the morning of the reſurrection: For our Lord proves that the dead ſhall riſe from this very circumſtance: He ſays to the Jews—"Have ye not read in the book of Moſes, how in the buſh God ſpake unto him, ſaying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob: He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living." In this faith the patriarchs died: being children of the reſurrection, they left their bodies in the hand and care of a covenant God, well aſſured that he would raiſe them up to glory, and life everlaſting, according to that good word, wherein he had cauſed them to put their truſt.

Theſe examples of the loving-kindneſs of God to his aged ſervants were recorded for our learning: That believers, if God by his providence ſhould bring them to old age, might be encouraged to truſt in the God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, with ſuch a confidence of their

their hearts, as not to doubt of the divine truth, or of the divine power. Whatever he was to them, he is the same to us—Our God as well as theirs—Our covenant God engaged to glorify both body and soul: On whom we are commanded to cast all our cares and concerns in extreme old age. If what is of nature be failing, what is of grace cannot. If the life of sense be dying, the life of faith should flourish the more: It is a life that cannot die: For the branches thrive and bring forth fruit in their old age, not of themselves, but because they are engrafted into the heavenly vine, in which they live for ever. "I am the vine, says Jesus, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: For without me ye can do nothing." But through my Spirit strengthening you, he will make you bud and flourish, and fill the face of the world with fruit. He will so fill you with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Christ Jesus, to the glory and praise of God, that your last days shall be your best days.

In this view of old age, it may become a favourable time for exercising and improving faith: Because the activity of the life of sense is abating, and thereby many things are removed, which before obstructed the growth of the spiritual life. Now is the time to learn to walk by faith, and not by sense. A believer, young in years,

years, and young in experience, is often tempted to judge of himſelf by his feelings, more than by the word of God. In a good frame he is a good believer. Then all is well with him. But when he is walking in darkneſs, he is very apt to queſtion his ſtate—If all be right with me, why am I thus?—My preſent frame is very dull and uncomfortable—I am not ſo lively as I uſed to be in prayer or in ordinances—my delight in God, and the things of God, is far ſhort of what it was formerly—perhaps I have been deceiving myſelf, and crying, Peace, Peace, when there was no peace for me.

From this temptation age itſelf is a ſort of deliverance: Self-activity is weakened, and thereby through grace ſelf-dependence. The believer, if he be a good ſcholar, will now learn to walk more by faith, and leſs by ſight. The vigour of his ſenſes is decaying. The high ſpirits of youth are abating. His preſent leſſon is very plain and ſimple, and while he attends to what is paſſing in him, and about him, he has a thouſand monitors, calling upon him now to learn and practiſe a perfect dependence on thoſe things which are always one and the ſame, without any variableneſs, or the leaſt ſhadow of turning. One record of God. One Saviour. One Spirit. One faith, of which the Saviour is the author and the finiſher. This faith is made to grow and flouriſh, as there is leſs dependence

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on other things: And as age itſelf tends to weaken this dependence, it becomes in the hand of the Holy Spirit, a favourable time to live leſs upon the things which are ſeen, and more upon the things which are not ſeen. Leſs of ſenſe, more of faith. One ſcale riſes as the other falls. The outward man dying, the inward man grows more lively—yea, grows up into Chriſt Jeſus, and that in all things. O bleſſed old man---thou haſt lived to a good time, when this is thy experience: When in the prayer of faith thou canſt caſt all thy burdens on thy Saviour: "Lord, keep me, a poor helpleſs creature---- Now I feel that of myſelf, I can do nothing, as I ought, or as I wiſh to do----Glorify thy grace in me, and ſtrengthen me mightily by thy Spirit in the inner man, that I may bleſs thee for thy ſalvation, and for the things which accompany ſalvation---Into thy faithful hands for life and death, I commit myſelf, and all my concerns; for thou haſt redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth."

But it muſt be remembered, that old age does not produce theſe happy effects of itſelf. It is not of nature, but entirely of grace, that any one is able to gain ſuch ſpiritual profit from bodily infirmities. The mere natural man, fortify him with all his boaſted aids of reaſon, and philoſophy, yet he cannot help murmuring, when age brings weakneſs, and ſickneſs brings pains.

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He becomes peeviſh and fretful. Having no friendſhip with God, he cannot look up for divine ſupports, when all human begin to fail him. Under a ſevere fit of the ſtone, or a long fit of the gout, he is often out of all patience. Uneaſy in himſelf, he is out of humour with every body and every thing. How different is the believer in the ſame circumſtances! His body feels pain as others do: But his mind is comfortable, and at eaſe. Happy in God, he has patience given him to bear his ſufferings, and grace to profit from them; yea, the peace of God rules in his heart always, and by all means.

An old man with this peace which ſurpaſſeth all underſtanding, ruling in his heart, will he ſo far from complaining, that he has every thing to be thankful for, which can render him bleſſed of the Lord. He is provided with an infallible antidote againſt all that old age can try him with----It is true, I have an infirm body, but thank God, I have a ſound mind: Age has brought upon me great weakneſs, but this makes more room for the power of God, that it may be perfected in my weakneſs. I have many pains, but not ſo many as he has comforts to give me; in the worſt of them he keeps me patient, Father thy will be done---I have an afflicted body, but I have an happy heart: although the outward man be periſhing, yet I faint not, becauſe the inward

inward man is renewed day by day---My ſupports are great, the conſolations of God not a few----- I feel the ſymptoms of old age warning me daily of my approaching diſſolution, through grace I take the warning----they find me living, and I hope they will find me dying, in the faith of the Son of God. The earthly tabernacle is taking down, but he does it with much tenderneſs and love, and aſſures me, that he has prepared for me a houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. May he who keeps it for me, and me for it, never leave me nor forſake me, till I be with him, where he is, and be like him, and enjoy him for ever and ever? Yet a very, very little while---hold on faith and patience, and I ſhall ſee Jeſus in his glory, which is the heaven of heavens.

O thou merciful and faithful high prieſt, Jeſus Chriſt, I bleſs thee for thy kind promiſes to the aged. Thou haſt ſuited them in great mercy to all their infirmities, and thou art always with them to help in time of need. I begin to feel the ſad effects of ſin in my body, weakening it, and tending to bring it down to its appointed end. To thee I look, almighty Jeſus, for thy promiſed grace. O grant me conſtant ſupplies of thy Spirit, that I may profit by my infirmities, may exerciſe and improve my faith in thee, that they may keep me humble, and I may pray more in faith, and keep me thankful, that I may

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be more in praiſe. Thine arm is not ſhortened, nor can thy compaſſions fail. Stand by me then, and hold me up according to thy word. Make me ſtrong in thy ſtrength, that I may daily put more honour upon thy love and thy power. In the decline of life, let me not doubt of thy faithfulneſs to ſupport, and when thou ſeeſt it beſt to comfort me. Vouchſafe me the conſolations of God, when my heart and my fleſh fail me, then be thou the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever. When I am weakeſt in myſelf, then make me ſtrongeſt in the Lord; and if it be thy holy will, that I ſhould become quite helpleſs, an infant again, make me to lie quiet in thy hand, without murmuring or repining, but believing that thou art all my ſalvation, and enjoying in thee all my deſire. Grant me this, Lord Jeſus; for thy mercies ſake, let me die in faith. Amen and Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

The believer's triumph over death.

MAN conſiſts of two parts, a body and a ſoul. The bodily life is dependent on the light and air of this world, and on the circulation, which they maintain and carry on. When this connexion is broken, the body expires, it loſes all ſenſe and motion, and is dead. So the life of the ſoul is dependent on the light and air of the ſpiritual world. Jehovah in Trinity is the creator, the only fountain of being, and there can be nothing independent of him: Chriſt is the light, and the Holy Spirit is the breath or air of all ſpiritual life, and when this connexion is broken, although the ſoul may exiſt, yet its happineſs in God is broken, and at an end. Sin, that great murderer ſin, brought death upon body and ſoul: "For as by one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin, ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned:" And we read, The ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die, ſin ſeparating it from its union, and thereby cutting it off from its communion with the Father of ſpirits. In the moment that Adam ſinned the ſpiritual death took place: For he had loſt the ſpirit of life, and was dead in treſpaſſes and ſins: And

And that ſame moment his body became mortal, although he lived nine hundred years after. Thus we have ſin, and death, and miſery, entailed upon all his deſcendants, from the firſt Adam, who is of the earth, earthy. O how precious to a ſinner in theſe circumſtances ſhould be the ſecond Adam, the Lord from heaven, who ſtands at the head of thy ſpiritual world, that he may give his righteouſneſs, and his life, and his happineſs, to all that believe in him! He comes Jehovah of hoſts in our nature, as our champion to fight our battles, and to conquer all our foes. Immanuel was made ſin for us, and he died for our ſins according to the ſcriptures, when the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all, and was buried and roſe again the third day according to the ſcriptures. We read therein of his noble challenge to death and the grave: " I will ranſom my people from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death--O death, I will be thy plagues--O grave, I will be thy deſtruction, repentance ſhall be hid from mine eyes." It was the Captain of our ſalvation, the Lord of hoſts is his name, who purpoſed this in the everlaſting councils, and in due time fulfilled it by his almighty power. " Becauſe the children were partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame, that through death he might deſtroy him who had the power of death, that is the

devil, and might deliver them, who through fear of death were all their life-time fubject to bondage." O what infinite condefcenfion is this, what love, furpaffing all knowledge! The moft high God is manifeft in the flefh, that as God in our nature, he might be our furety to act and fuffer for us men, and for our falvation. Accordingly he takes our fins upon himfelf, bears the guilt and punifhment of them in his own body and foul upon the tree, gives his own life a ranfom for ours, that by his death we might live. He was buried, but he rofe again the third day, having loofed the bonds of death, becaufe it was not poffible that he fhould be holden of it. In this conflict with death and the grave, repentance was hid from his eyes. He knew what he was to go through, more than any of us can conceive of pain and agony, yet he would not change his purpofe of grace, although he was to become obedient unto death, the moft tormenting, the moft fhameful, even the death of the crofs. His enemies having brought him to the grave, and the fealed fepulchre, feemed then to have him in their power. So they thought: But here Jefus made his complete and eternal triumph. By his refurrection he fwallowed up death in victory: For he did not rife as a private perfon, but as the firft fruits of the dead, drawing the joyful harveft after him. The Lord is rifen indeed, the head of the body, the church,

and has the power of an endleſs life to quicken all his members. In which moſt glorious proſpect, the apoſtle, quoting the paſſage above mentioned, breaks out into theſe raptures of joy, ſeeing all his enemies vanquiſhed, and nothing but bliſs and glory before him---" O death, where is thy ſting, O grave, where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the law." The law armed death with its ſting, as the juſt wages of the tranſgreſſion of the law: But Jeſus our ſurety magnified the law by his holy life in all its precepts, and by his death in all its penalties. He died for our ſins, and by his riſing from the dead, he demonſtrated that he had taken out its ſting, and had diſarmed it of its power to hurt: Nay had done much more --He had changed death into life. " I am the reſurrection and the life, ſaith the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live; and whoſoever liveth and believeth in me, ſhall never die." By faith in him we ſhare in the triumph and glory of his reſurrection, and have a new ſong put into our mouths, with which we may make the ſweeteſt melody in our hearts, even when our breath is failing us: " Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord."

Theſe are ſcripture views of the almighty Jeſus. Out of his infinite compaſſion he undertook to ſave his people from ſin and death, the works

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of the devil. And he has done it. It is finiſhed. He has put away ſin by his ſacrifice, and he completed his conqueſt of death by his reſurrection. And has had witneſſes of theſe goſpel truths in all ages, whom he ſent to preach repentance, and remiſſion of ſins, in his name. When it is the good pleaſure of his own will to accompany the meſſage with power from on high, then he bleſſes it by making it the miniſtration of righteouſneſs and of life: As it is written, "Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth in him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation, but is paſſed from death unto life," already. The Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus hath freed the believer from the law of ſin and of death, and has alſo created in him a new life: He has given him a new birth into the ſpiritual world, and ſpiritual ſenſes to fit him for ſpiritual enjoyments: For he is actually paſſed from death unto life. By the holy ſpirit as the agent, and by faith as the inſtrument, he is made a child of God, united to Chriſt, one with him, intereſted in him, and ſo cloſely joined to him, as the members are to the head, as to be a real partaker of all that he did upon earth, and of all that he is now doing for his redeemed in heaven. He has a good warrant, for he is not only permitted, but alſo commanded, to apply to himſelf all the privileges and bleſſings, which are contained in this large

large charter of grace. "Ye are complete in Chriſt, who is the head of all principality and power: In whom alſo ye are circumciſed with the circumciſion made without hands, in putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh by the circumciſion of Chriſt, buried with him in baptiſm, wherein alſo ye are riſen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raiſed him from the dead: And you being dead in your ſins, and the uncircumciſion of your fleſh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all treſpaſſes, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances, that was againſt us, which was contrary to us; and he took it out of the way, nailing it to his croſs, and having ſpoiled principalities and powers, he made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing over them in that ſame croſs." In this view of the almighty conqueror of all our enemies, and of his enabling us alſo by faith to come after him, conquering and to conquer, what thanks and praiſes ſhould be given unto him? There is no poſſible evil, but he has removed it from us--and no poſſible good, but he has obtained the right, and gives the poſſeſſion. We are complete in him, our head--completely circumciſed in heart by his circumciſion, ſo as to put off the body of ſin, and riſen indeed with him by the faith of his own operation: Through which we have the firſt reſurrection from the grave of ſin, and ſhall have the reſurrection of

the body from the grave of death. He now gives the firſt as a ſure earneſt of the ſecond. He raiſes us from the grave of ſin, and quickens us to newneſs of life, and thereby gives us a lively hope, that we ſhall one day be with him and like him. In this hope the redeemed of the Lord have thus expreſſed their joys--We will rejoice in thy ſalvation, and in the name of our God we will ſet up our banners, in defiance of all our enemies--we need not fear ſin, nor Satan, nor death, nor hell. Our Redeemer is ſtrong, the Lord of hoſts is his name. He for us men, and for our ſalvation, was manifeſted to deſtroy the works of the devil. And he has deſtroyed them. He died for our ſins, and roſe again for our juſtification. His victory was complete, and in him we conquer. We come after him only to gather up the ſpoils of his triumph. Through faith in him the ſting of death is taken out of the conſcience, and thereby the fear of it out of the heart--A believer ought to ſay, and when he is in his right mind he ſays with joy and gratitude ---" The Lord is my light, and my ſalvation, what then ſhall I fear? The Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom then ſhall I be afraid? Yea, though I walk through the valley and ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil---I need not fear any, becauſe thou my Lord and Saviour haſt promiſed to be with me, thy rod and thy ſtaff, they ſhall comfort me." What an infallible antidote has

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our Jesus here provided against all guilty fears, and against all natural fears? These promises to his dying followers cannot fail. He who made them is almighty to fulfil them; and almighty to enable us to believe, that he will both support and comfort. Jesus, wonderful in his person, wonderful in all his works and ways--He has changed the very nature of death. He has turned it into life. Whosoever believeth in him shall never die, but is passed already from death unto life. The Holy Spirit has put him into present possession of a life laid up with Christ, out of the reach of death. So that when his body expires, it falls asleep in the Lord, and his spirit enters upon an eternal triumph of life and glory, among the Spirits of just men made perfect.

O what a deliverance is this from the bondage of sin, and the terrors of the grave. It is the peculiar blessedness of believers in Jesus: For the natural man cannot but fear death, and look upon it as his enemy. He has no prospects, but what are bounded by time. His whole happiness is in the present world, and in the enjoyment of what he calls the blessings of it. He was laying fine plans, and hoping to live to execute them--heaping up riches--living in the unrestrained liberty of sensual enjoyments---murdering his time---misspending his talents--without any concern about eternal things—When, lo, an enemy comes, and puts an end to all his schemes.

He dies. Perhaps he may be a ſceptic, doubting of the certainty of a future ſtate: He may wiſh there was none, but he can have no evidence: And if he continue to wiſh it, even to the laſt, O what a ſcene will open, when he meets a juſt and an angry God! He may be a materialiſt, and pleaſe himſelf with fancying, that what we call his ſoul, will vaniſh at his death into ſoft air: But the God of truth ſays, That when the duſt ſhall return to the earth as it was, the ſpirit ſhall return to God who gave it: And in the morning of the reſurrection Chriſt will reanimate the duſt, and body and ſoul ſhall be united to live for ever. He may be one of the careleſs, quite unprepared, but when the meſſenger arreſts him, he muſt go with him, and that in a moment. Perhaps he may be a moraliſt, truſting to his own goodneſs; he may fortify himſelf with arguments taken from Seneca, but theſe will furniſh him with no armour, proof againſt the guilt of ſin, or the ſting of death. He may ſeek aids from philoſophy, falſely ſo called, but its votaries profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, in the hour of death found that they were fools. Every human help has failed, when moſt wanted. "But bleſſed is he, who hath the God of Jacob for his help, and whoſe hope is in the Lord his God: Who made heaven and earth, and all that therein is, who keepeth his promiſe for ever." Here is the Chriſtian's never failing ſupport. God,

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even his covenant God has promiſed to be with him, and to be his Saviour in death. God Jeſus, almighty to keep his promiſe for ever, is his one hope, living and dying: And he is his gain both in life and death. If he has won Chriſt, he has lived to a bleſſed time, and whenever he dies, Chriſt will make death his friend, and will reconcile him to his going to the Lord, which is beſt of all. To look upon death as an enemy, to fear it, as if it could take from us any thing worth keeping, or as if it did not put us into the eternal poſſeſſion of every thing worth enjoying, theſe are views of the reſurrection of Jeſus very diſhonorable to his victories, and very injurious to our intereſt in him. He undertook to conquer death for us, as our ſurety. He has done it. He has ſwallowed up death in victory. He has made it our friend and our benefactor: For he has engaged to ſupport us in our laſt moments. He never did, he never can fail any who put their truſt in him. Experience has confirmed his faithfulneſs in all ages. His ſoldiers, whom he made valiant in fight, a goodly company whom no one can number, have triumphed glorioufly—before death—in death—and after death.

Before death he prepared them to meet it in faith: For the great deſign of his goſpel is to arm them againſt the guilt of ſin, and the terrors of death. And they are good ſoldiers of Chriſt Jeſus

Jeſus who put on this armour---who have learnt their exerciſe, and who by their daily battles keep their arms ſhining and bright. Looking to Jeſus, the Captain of their ſalvation, for orders, for courage, for ſtrength, for victory, all oppoſition falls before them. He enables them to fight the good fight of faith, and the more they conquer ſin, the leſs they have to fear from death: For Chriſt is to them the whole armour of God, and the pieces of this armour are the graces of his Spirit. For with theſe the apoſtle ſays, in Epheſians, chap. vi. that Chriſt has perfectly equipped the armies of the Lord. They have the truth of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the peace of God in Chriſt, faith in Chriſt, the word of Chriſt, hope in Chriſt, and prayer to Chriſt for freſh ſupplies of his Spirit, that he would enable them to make ſuch a uſe of their armour, that they might get the victory over ſin and death, and he might get all the praiſe. In this holy war He is every thing to them, and they find in him, and receive out of his fulneſs, whatever they want for the peace of their conſcience, and for the happineſs of their hearts. Sin is pardoned. Death is conquered. They experience the power of his reſurrection, and being paſſed from death unto life, they have believing views of their own diſſolution. We read of their deliverance from the fear of death, and we have examples of thoſe who were more afraid of ſin than

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of death, yea, who chofe to go into a burning fiery furnace, rather than offend their God: Hear how they triumphed---" Our God is able to deliver us, but if he does not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not ferve thy gods, nor worfhip the golden image which thou haft fet up." Hear the witnefs of another Chriftian hero, how he was enabled to look upon death --" The holy Ghoft witneffeth in every city, faying, that bonds and afflictions abide me: But none of thefe things move me, neither count I my life dear to myfelf, fo that I might finifh my courfe with joy, and the miniftry which I have received of the Lord Jefus, to teftify the gofpel of the grace of God." This was a great victory, but the cafe is not fingular: In the fame faith died the noble army of martyrs, of whom we read --" That they overcame the accufer of the brethren by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their teftimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death." And to this day, the Holy Spirit witneffes to the fame truth, and feals it upon the confciences of believers in the hour of death. I call one evidence, a great Dignitary in our Church, a man of great learning, and never fufpected of enthufiafm, being near his death he thus expreffed himfelf--" I cannot plead innocency of life, efpecially of my youth: But I am to be judged by a merciful God, who is not willing to fee what I have done amifs:

amiſs: And though of myſelf I have nothing to preſent to him, but ſins and miſery: yet I know he looks not upon me now as I am of myſelf, but as I am in my Saviour, and hath given me, even at this time, ſome teſtimonies by his Holy Spirit, that I am of the number of his elect: I am therefore full of joy, and ſhall die in peace."

Thus the precious Jeſus was in the proſpect of death more deſirable than life itſelf. So he was to them in dying. All theſe died in faith. They were his witneſſes, that he kept every thing hurtful from them, and brought them in triumph to the end of their lives. That great company round his throne, who are crowned conquerors, teſtify for him that he did not leave them, nor forſake them one moment. He kept his word with them. He ſmoothed their bed in their ſickneſs. He was tender over them, and wiped away all tears from their eyes. When fainting he gave them ſtrong conſolation, when he called them to meet death in all its terrors, to ſuffer in flames of fire, to be torn to pieces by wild beaſts, to be tormented in every way that malice could invent, or the power of tyrants could inflict---He was with them---their Saviour and their God---the tender care of his heart, and the mighty power of his arm, were never more felt than when moſt wanted. He kept his peace ruling in their conſciences always and by all means, and gave them to feel, that bodily pain could

could not leſſen his love to them, nor abate or ſtop their love to him. I might bring a cloud of witneſſes to prove the compaſſion of Jeſus to his redeemed in their dying hours; but let theſe two ſuffice: Dr. Thomas Goodwin was upon his death-bed, when his friend Mr. Collins came to viſit him, and to pray with him, to whom he ſaid, "He rejoiced that he was dying, and going to have a full and uninterrupted communion with God."

"I am going, ſaid he, to the three perſons, with whom I have had communion: They have taken me, I did not take them. I ſhall be changed in the twinkling of an eye: All my luſts and corruptions I ſhall be rid of, which I could not be here."

After mentioning theſe great examples of faith, Hebrews, chap. xi. he ſaid, "All theſe died in faith: I could not have imagined I ſhould ever have ſuch a meaſure of faith as I have in this hour. My bow abides in ſtrength. Is Chriſt divided? No. I have the whole of his righteouſneſs. I am found in him, not in my own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but in the righteouſneſs which is of God, which is by faith of Jeſus Chriſt, who loved me and gave himſelf for me: Chriſt cannot love me better than he does, and I think I cannot love Chriſt better than I do: I am ſwallowed up in God."

The hiſtorian remarks, That with this aſſurance of faith and fulneſs of joy his ſoul left this

world, and went to see and to enjoy the reality of that blessed state of glory, of which, in a discourse on that subject, he had given a very lively description.

I may be permitted to call another witness to this blessed truth, a believer who just before his death addressed himself to his friends in these words--" My brethren, is not this very amazing to you. When I contemplate the holiness of God, I cannot but cry out, that I myself am vile, most vile: and then when I consider the justice of God, could any one imagine, but that I should be struck with most dreadful apprehensions of approaching judgment and deserved wrath? Instead of that, I am under no fear of the latter, and much desire the former. I long to appear before this holy just God: I have a righteousness to plead that is perfect. The holy Jesus is my security; and I cannot be disappointed: In Christ the justice of God is as much my security as his mercy: Here is a holiness that transcends that all of the angelic host. There is no charging my Redeemer with possible folly: O, I know I am pardoned for the sake of Jesus Christ, my only Lord and mediator: I am sure of it: I am fully, freely pardoned: I shall soon be thoroughly sanctified and fitted for glory: O, I want words to express my gratitude, to tell my joy: Adored be God, my Lord, my Saviour: This is the work of God alone: O unfathomable love,

love, infinite condeſcenſion, unmerited, unbounded grace to a vile offender; I deſerve hell: I enjoy heaven."

O thou that readeſt this honourable mention of the love of Jeſus to his dying followers, may it be given thee to find him near to thee in that time of need! If thy faith be in him, doubt not. Take courage, and live up to thy privileges. Regard his promiſe. Obſerve his faithfulneſs to it. Depend upon his arm. Truſt in him, and be not afraid. Since he has overcome death, why ſhouldeſt thou fear that it will overcome thee? Is not his victory thine? Whatever thou feeleſt in thyſelf; if nature ſhrink, and thou haſt many uneaſy thoughts about thy diſſolution: remember that all thy ſalvation is in, and from him, and he has made thee a free gift of ſalvation, and of all the things which accompany ſalvation---He undertook it all-- He has finiſhed it all---He has put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf---He has conquered death. It is now a vanquiſhed foe. In his hand it is the royal way to the kingdom, the only way. Truſt him, he will not ſuffer it to hurt thee. Truſt him, and thou wilt find there is nothing in it, that ought to frighten thee. Breath may be failing thee, but Jeſus will not fail thee. He has pronounced them bleſſed, he will infallibly make them bleſſed, who die in the Lord. Only believe, and thou wilt experience, that he has dying conſolations for his dying friends.

They live in death. He makes them bleſſed in dying: yea, ſometimes to encourage the faith of others, and to recommend his own grace, he has vouchſafed to give them, at the time of their death, a foretaſte of the glory which was juſt going to be revealed. In this faith they leave the world, caſting all their care for time and for eternity, for body and ſoul, upon him who careth for them. Jeſus, into thy hand I commend my ſpirit, for thou haſt redeemed me. O Lord, thou God of truth. I believe in the reſurrection of the body: Thou haſt promiſed it, and I hope it ſhall be done unto me according to thy word. Chriſt is the firſt fruits, and afterward they that are Chriſt's at his coming, when he will bring the joyful harveſt with him; therefore into his faithful hands I commit my body. I take my leave of it in faith. It is not poſſible, that the grave ſhould hold me in any more than it could him. And I not only hope to be raiſed from the grave, but I ſhall be brought out of it in triumph, on that day of wonders, when Jeſus Chriſt, the great God and our Saviour, ſhall change this my vile body, and ſhall make it like unto his own moſt glorious body. O what a change! O what a miracle! This very body, which is now ſinful duſt, ſhall be like the Son of God, who is the ſtandard of all perfection---even this body of mine ſhall be conformed to his moſt glorious body; although it be now an houſe, ſo infected with

with the leproſy of ſin, that it muſt be taken down, yet out of its ruins will the Lord raiſe it a monument to his eternal praiſe, even an habitation of God by his Spirit. Come then, thou bleſſed of the Lord, O welcome, welcome death ---Thou art the ſmiling meſſenger from my Jeſus, bringing with thee glad tidings of great joy---of a ſalvation ſecured from all poſſible evil, and the enjoyment of all poſſible good. In ſure and certain hope of this complete and eternal ſalvation, I reſign my body into thy hands, thou Lord of life, and giver of glory---I entruſt it with thee to be kept againſt that day, when all that ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him. For this proſpect, for believing views of it, for the earneſt, and for ſome little foretaſte of it, to the eternal Three be eternal praiſe. *Amen.*

Such are the hopes of a real chriſtian, which he is warranted, which he is commanded to entertain in the hour of death, which God in his infinite grace actually favours his people with, to the ſtrengthening of their faith, and to the ſilencing of unbelievers. Never did he diſplay his faithfulneſs more ſignally than in our times. Many inſtances might be given, but I ſelect one, who thus expreſſed himſelf to his friends ſurrounding his death bed.

" My ſoul is abundantly comforted and refreſhed: My body is dying, but my mind is ſtill vigorous and alive: I feel the cold hand of death

death is actually upon me; and you may feel it too, if you touch my feet and legs, they are once more clay. Bleſſed be God, death is no king of terrors to me. He is a welcome meſſenger, becauſe ſent by my heavenly Father. Here I am, O Lord, waiting thy pleaſure; ready to obey the ſummons: Thy will, O Lord, be done. Bleſſed be God, that the attack is made below: My head is as yet very clear and untouched, and till my heart feels the damp, I hope to be engaged in work ſuitable to a death bed: It is not to me a bed of languiſhing, or waſting: This poor remainder of a body is hardly capable of any greater decay, till it moulders in the grave; and there let it moulder. Who would not part with it as it is? It is now my burden, my bar to happineſs, an hindrance to a lively ſpiritual communion with God. But, O my friends, it is united to Chriſt, and ſhall therefore one day become a glorious body. This corruption ſhall put on incorruption, and ſhall be for ever with the Lord." Thanks be to God for ſuch a witneſs---may my latter end be like his.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The character of the perſons, who have moſt reaſon to triumph in Chriſt.

THEY are ſuch as know moſt of themſelves, and have ſeen the deepeſt into the myſtery of iniquity. The Holy Spirit has convinced them of ſin---of original ſin, the fountain from which all the ſtreams flow of actual ſin in thought, word, and deed. In this conviction he has put life and power: It is far more than a moral perſuaſion---he makes it practical and abiding: For the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus quickens the dead ſinner, and making him free from the law of ſin, and of death, gives him the faith of God's elect: And by the daily uſe and exerciſe of that faith makes him more ſenſible of his obligations to Jeſus. In every act of faith he leads the believer out of ſelf to the Saviour---humbles him that he may exalt Chriſt---empties him of ſelf, that he may fill him with the good things of Chriſt---caſts down, and keeps down every high thing that exalteth itſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and brings into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt. In his hand, and by his bleſſing, this work proſpers. The loftineſs of man is humbled, and the haughti-

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neſs of man is bowed down, and Jehovah alone is exalted in that day---according to the oracle of truth---"He ſhall glorify me"---which is the office of the Holy Spirit to teſtify of Chriſt, and to glorify Chriſt, by taking of the things of Chriſt, and by putting the believer into the poſſeſſion of them.

In this ſchool of humility every view that can be taken of ſelf is abaſing: And as the leſſon becomes more and better experienced, ſin more diſcovered in its exceeding wickedneſs, and more felt in its exceeding great danger, the believer is enabled to rejoice more in Chriſt Jeſus, as he has leſs confidence in the fleſh. And when he attains to the higheſt of his triumph, which he can have in Chriſt in this world, he is then the loweſt in his own eyes—

When he looks back and ſurveys what he was by nature and practice---

When he conſiders, what he is now, although he be renewed by grace---

And when he looks forward to what he hopes to be at the appearing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt---

Every thing in the ſcripture doctrine, and every thing in ſcripture experience leads him to conclude---Behold, I am vile, I abhor myſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes: So that whenever he is tempted to glory, he has nothing left him to glory in, but the Lord: Self always abaſed, that Chriſt alone may be exalted.

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When he looks back to what he was by nature, and practice; the more he knows, he will be the more deeply humbled, for what he was when under the law, and under sin, and for what he still feels of a body of sin and of death. He was the creature of God's power, made out of nothing---distinguished by his being in the image of God, and by being capable of communion with him in all the graces and blessings of his love. He was under the best law that could be given him for promoting God's glory and his own happiness. He was bound to perfect and continual obedience to it, and was left to his own will and power, that he should not offend in any one point: But upon his transgression he became liable to suffer the threatened pains and penalties of the broken law. Every right view of himself in this state ought to humble and to abase the sinner, and it effectually does, when the conviction is from God. He then finds that his nature was earthly, sensual, and having not the Spirit, it was alienated from the life of God. All his thoughts and actions were not only irregular, but also contrary to the holy law. His very imagination was evil, only evil, and that continually. His understanding was not only ignorant of spiritual things, but was darkness itself. His will was a rebel. His affections apostate, ever at enmity with God. Misery and destruction were in his ways: of the way of peace he had no knowledge, neither was there any fear of God before his eyes:

For although death and hell were threatened, and were ready to give him the juſt wages of his iniquity, yet he was quite careleſs and ſecure. Like the atheiſts of old, when warned of their approaching deſtruction by the prophet---" Let us eat and drink, ſay they, for to-morrow we die."

This true knowledge of the exceeding evil of ſin, and the right humiliation for it, come by believing, and are the genuine fruits and effects of it. Legal conviction has guilt and bondage in it, and worketh ſorrow unto death. But the conviction of the Holy Spirit reveals the remedy along with the diſeaſe, and produces ſuch a repentance as is not to be repented of---a turning from ſin to Chriſt---teaching us practically and daily, what we are in ourſelves, and how much we want ſuch an almighty Saviour, to teach us how to truſt in him as our great high prieſt, and to live happy and holy under his government, which is perfect freedom. Every act of this faith is humbling. The believer is made to feel his need of that in himſelf, which he is commanded to truſt in Chriſt for. And the more he is enabled to depend upon Chriſt, he will certainly have the leſs in himſelf. And when his whole dependence is as it ought to be, fixed upon Chriſt, he will come to the apoſtle's experience, even ſo to rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus, as to put no confidence in the fleſh. Herein conſiſts the triumph of the Chriſtian. In every ſtep of his walk

walk and warfare he is led from ſelf to Chriſt---kept humbled in his own eyes that he may exalt the Saviour---emptied of ſelf that he may live upon the fulneſs of Jeſus, and may thereby be taught to reſt his heart in him at all times, and for all things.

With reſpect to ſin, which is his daily burden, under which he is always ſorrowing, yet in Chriſt he can always rejoice. The more he knows of the exceeding wickedneſs of ſin, the more precious is Jeſus, and the more he does value the blood of the Lamb of God, which cleanſeth from all ſin. In his conſcience purged from guilt, he can triumph with exceeding great joy, that there is now no condemnation to them who are in Chriſt Jeſus: For where ſin abounded, grace does much more abound: That as ſin hath reigned unto death, even ſo might grace reign through righteouſneſs unto eternal life by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. His grateful acknowledgments are ſuch as theſe---

I was even as others once---by nature a child of wrath, and an heir of miſery---I was going on in the broad way of deſtruction---careleſs and ſecure---and I am quite aſtoniſhed to ſee the danger that I was in---I tremble to behold the precipice which I was ready to fall over, when Jeſus opened mine eyes, and by the light of his word and Spirit, ſhewed me my guilt and my danger, and put it into my heart to flee from the wrath to come. O what a moſt merciful eſcape!

I cannot think of it without adoring the compaſſionate Saviour, who remembered me in my low eſtate: For his mercy endureth for ever. And hath redeemed me from the hand of all mine enemies: For his mercy endureth for ever: Not unto me, not unto me in the leaſt, but to the ſuperabounding grace of my God be all the glory. That the Father would make me an object of his choice and love. That Jeſus Immanuel would humble himſelf to be manifeſt in the fleſh, and be obedient unto death, for me and for my ſalvation. That the Holy Ghoſt would give me a new birth into the ſpiritual world, and would quicken me into union with Jeſus, and to the enjoyment of the Father's love in him—adored for ever and ever be the holy, bleſſed, and glorious Trinity. That ſuch a filthy ſinner ſhould be cleanſed from all ſin—that ſuch an ungodly creature ſhould be freely juſtified by grace—that ſuch a miſerable ſinner ſhould be bleſſed with all ſpiritual bleſſings—that ſuch a weak creature ſhould be ſtrengthened mightily by the Spirit in the inner man, and when weakeſt in myſelf, then to be ſtrongeſt in the Lord—O what riches! What unſearchable riches of grace are theſe! Abide with me, O thou Spirit of the Father and the Son, and keep me conſtantly dependent on the freſh ſupplies of thy divine influence. By thy daily teaching keep open to me the depth and myſtery of iniquity, the exceeding wickedneſs of ſin—of my ſin, that

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by thy holy inſpiration I may live more by faith, and nothing may be ſuffered to hinder my growing fellowſhip with the Father and the Son, until I am admitted to full and eternal fellowſhip. *Amen.*

Thus reflecting with ſelf-abhorrence upon what he was by nature, when he was under the law, and under ſin, which is the tranſgreſſion of the law, alive to ſin, but dead to God—He is led to conſider,

What he is now, although he be renewed by grace, a believer and a man in Chriſt: How he feels himſelf, after much and ſound experience of his title to ſalvation, and of his enjoyment of the things which accompany ſalvation---Every day and in every thing he has freſh matter for the deepeſt humiliation. He finds, that he is ſtill a man in Adam---ſtill he carries about him a ſinful nature, an old man as well as a new, a body of ſin with all its members, he has ſpirit, but he has alſo fleſh, and that which is born of the fleſh is fleſh, nothing but corruption, as that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. The old man has fleſh ſtill, with all its appetites and luſts: The new man is by the Spirit of life, that is in Chriſt Jeſus, alive to God. In the ſame perſon ſin dwelleth, as we read, "When we were in the fleſh, the motions of ſin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. And the new man liveth, who after God is created in righteouſneſs

righteouſneſs and true holineſs." The apoſtle in Romans, chap. vii. not only confeſſes that he had nature and grace in him at the ſame time, but alſo deſcribes it at full length. Indwelling ſin was his continual grief, and his heavy burden: An apoſtle in Chriſt, and yet he felt the plague of his own heart: And it was his daily croſs, which he was forced to bear---and his conſtant enemy, againſt which he was always at war---no peace, no truce could be made. The fleſh was ever luſting againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe two with ſuch unceaſing oppoſition night and day, that he could not do the things that he would, either ſo continually or ſo perfectly. He deſcribes this battle as it was carried on in his own experience, the two combatants ſtriving in him for maſtery. He was a good ſoldier of Jeſus Chriſt, and as well inſtructed and armed as ever any believer was for this warfare, having on the whole armor of God, and yet wearied with this daily conflict, he is forced to cry out, "O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?" He had no deliverance in or from himſelf, it was againſt himſelf that he fought, and of himſelf he was led to deſpair. But looking to Jeſus he takes courage, aſſuring himſelf of a complete victory, and of an everlaſting triumph in the Captain of his ſalvation---I thank God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. So then, (this is the

the concluſion of the whole matter) ſo then with the mind I myſelf ſerve the law of God, but with the fleſh the law of ſin.

This is ſtill the experience of every true believer, at all times, and upon all occaſions: He has a practical comment upon the ſeventh chapter of the Romans in his own boſom: He has heartfelt experience of the warfare between the fleſh and the ſpirit: He finds it hard fighting; harder, becauſe it is continual---it will never ceaſe ſo long as fleſh is fleſh, that is, ſo long as the believer lives in the body and in the preſent world. Indwelling ſin never reſts---it is like the troubled ſea, always caſting up its filthy motions, and then the moſt troubleſome when he would be the freeſt from them. O what humbling leſſons does he learn in all his approaches to God: He knows his privileges, and he wiſhes to live up to them, but he cannot. When he would draw near to God in the prayer of faith, the ſpirit is willing, but the fleſh is weak. On his bended knees deſiring to confeſs his ſins, and to humble himſelf under the mighty hand of God, imploring pardon through the redemption that is in the blood of the Lamb, and expecting it freely, as the moſt ſovereign mercy that a poor ſinner can receive---Alas, alas! even then ſhame and confuſion cover his face. He deſires to keep his thoughts from wandering, he would have his whole heart engaged in the duty, but he cannot.

His imagination is not to be reſtrained. When he would be uniting all his affections in fervent and effectual prayer---vain, fooliſh thoughts force themſelves upon him---he drives them away as Abraham did the birds which came down upon the ſacrifice, but they will return. He mourns, as well he may, for theſe diſtractions of his mind, and is deeply convinced, that a moſt holy God might juſtly condemn him for his very beſt devotions. He is therefore led to put them into the hands of the Mediator, that he may perfume them with much of his incenſe for their acceptance, and through his interceſſion, and through that only, he may obtain an anſwer of grace.

Neither can he truſt in his praiſes any more than in his prayers. Let him praiſe ever ſo much, and ever ſo well, yet he can make no ſuitable acknowledgments for the bleſſing of creation. Once he was nothing: for his being at all---for ſuch a being, rather than any other---for being made a man, and at firſt highly favoured with the image and friendſhip of God---who can expreſs the noble acts of the Lord, or ſhew forth all his praiſe for the miracle of creation? But who can conceive, how great, how endleſs are the bleſſings of the new creation? For they are all gifts of God's grace---diſtinguiſhing and ſovereign---given to ſinners as ſinners---to the chief of ſinners---continued to the unworthy---increaſed to the unthankful---how great in their nature

nature---how invaluable the ſum of them: The believer deeply impreſſed with theſe ſentiments acknowledges that he is leſs than the leaſt of all God's mercies, yea, he is ſenſible that he deſerves the heavieſt of the divine vengeance: So that his prayer, *God be merciful to me a ſinner*, lays the foundation of his very beſt praiſes. He who has moſt forgiven will love moſt. He who feels what he really is among the chief of ſinners, will be among the chief of thoſe worſhippers who aſcribe all their ſalvation to God and the Lamb. The humbleſt amongſt them will feel that they have moſt reaſon to be thankful. But ſtill their praiſes are no payment. They muſt receive freſh grace to praiſe with, and more grace to praiſe better. The debt increaſes by the addition of freſh gifts of grace, and leaves the believer nothing to glory in but the Lord—to be ſaved—to feel it—to enjoy it by faith—to be made, and to be kept thankful, giving all the glory where it is due; theſe are among the mercies which endure for ever.

In this ſchool of ſelf-abaſement he is taught to be humbled for his ſhort attainments in the ſcriptures, read, or preached, or meditated on. How ſeldom does he attend the word, as that congregation did—"Behold we are all here preſent before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." This preparation of heart was from the Lord. He diſpoſed Cornelius and his

his family to receive the word aright, and his bleſſing came upon them in hearing it: For while Peter was ſpeaking, the Holy Ghoſt fell on all them that heard the word. And it would be ſo ſtill, if there was the ſame dependence on his grace, and the prayer of faith for his teaching along with the word. How little is this depended upon under hearing, although the profit be entirely from him: How ſeldom is the mixing faith with it received and acknowledged, therefore the memory keeps little impreſſion of the word, and in heart it is not fruitful as it ought to be. On all theſe accounts the believer mourns and is humbled before God. He feels it to be true, " I know that in me, that is in my fleſh, dwelleth no good thing: For to will is preſent with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not." He is ſenſible of theſe failings and diſtractions, even when he labours to be moſt free from them. He is going to the Lord's table to be fed and feaſted, hoping that he is one with Chriſt, and Chriſt is one with him. He would gladly partake of the fruits and bleſſings of this union by communion with Chriſt, by receiving the bread of life, and the cup of ſalvation, according to Chriſt's holy inſtitution. He comes in faith to eat the fleſh of Chriſt, and to drink his blood, in grateful remembrance of him--according as he hath been taught--The body and blood of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt

Chriſt which was given for me, preſerve my body and ſoul unto eternal life---I take and I eat this bread, and I take and I drink this cup in remembrance that Chriſt died for me, and I deſire to feed on him in my heart by faith with thankſgiving. In this ſervice he would have his whole ſoul engaged, that nothing might interrupt his communion with his Beloved. But vain thoughts, which lodge within him, will break out. They intrude, although moſt unwelcome gueſts, into this banquet of love: So that he is conſtrained to cry out, Lord Jeſus, pardon the failings of my holy things; I come to the throne of thy grace, that I may obtain mercy, and may find more grace to help me in every time of need.

When he is led to conſider what is the cauſe of all theſe failings--O what an abiding leſſon of humility has he to learn! He ſees that they all ſpring from the bitter root of unbelief, and are the fruits of remaining corruption; which can only be kept down, and conquered, as the ſtrength of Chriſt apprehended by faith prevails over them. Self, pride, legality, nurſe them: They have their being, their activity, their power, from thoſe fleſhly luſts which war againſt the ſoul, and render the whole life of the believer one continued act of ſelf-denial. He has ſtill a body of ſin, with all its members, mixing with every duty, ſo that he cannot ground his faith and hope upon the beſt of them. The work

work of Jeſus upon earth, the interceſſion of Jeſus in heaven, are the ſoul ground of his confidence towards God. His motive is good---he aims at pleaſing God in all things, he would do his will, and ſuffer his will, as it is his bounden duty with faith and patience. His end is good ---he would gladly keep the glory of God in his eye, and direct all he does to it, as his elder brethren do in heaven. But he cannot. When the ſpirit is willing, the fleſh is weak. Yet he is not ſo diſcouraged as to give over and ceaſe his approaches to God, becauſe of his infirmities. Having obtained help of God he fights on the good fight of faith. He does not leave off praying becauſe he is not ſo ſpiritual as he deſires to be: But he is rather more earneſt and fervent. The Spirit helping his infirmities, keeps him in a humble dependence upon Jeſus waiting on him for a due ſenſe of his wants, for the acceptance of his prayers for a ſupply of them, for pardoning the failings of them, for more faith in them, and for enabling him to continue inſtant in prayer, according to the divine command, that men ought always to pray and not to faint, which ſuppoſes them to be kept in a praying frame, and to uſe the means which Saint Jude recommends for the obtaining of theſe bleſſings, " But ye beloved, building up yourſelves on your moſt holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghoſt, keep yourſelves in the love of God, looking for

the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life."

As he is not weary of his prayers becauſe they are not ſo ſpiritual as he could wiſh: So neither is he weary of his praiſes, although they fall far ſhort of what ſuch a Saviour deſerves, and of what he would acknowledge with all poſſible gratitude: Becauſe he falls ſhort, he aims higher. He feels himſelf under infinite obligations to the Father for his love, to the Son for his ſalvation, and by the ſupply of the Spirit's grace he is made ſenſible, that he is not only leſs than the leaſt of divine mercies, but if he had his juſt deſerts, he ſhould have judgment without mercy. This lays the foundation for his higheſt praiſes. The faithful witneſs for Jeſus makes the believer willing to be beholden to him for every mercy; yea, to glory in being a penſioner upon his fulneſs: From which he receives grace for grace, that in all things he may be giving of thanks: According to the Lord's favor to his people, informing them to take with them words, and turn to the Lord, and ſay unto him, "Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly, ſo will we render the calves of our lips," which is the ſacrifice of the New Teſtament worſhippers, who through Jeſus the mediator offer the ſacrifice of praiſe continually; that is, the fruit of their lips, giving thanks to his name, wiſhing, praying to do it with

with ſome of the praiſes of heaven, as one ſaid, " I will hope continually, and I will yet praiſe thee more and more."

As theſe prayers and praiſes are grounded upon faith in the divine promiſes, this makes the believer a diligent reader of the ſcriptures. He does not neglect his bible, becauſe he has not yet attained the perfect knowledge of every part of it. For that very reaſon he ſtudies it more: he prays more over it, grows more thankful for the divine power, which ſtill accompanies it, and ſtudies and prays that he may experience more of this power: It has been the means of making him wiſe unto ſalvation through faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus. He finds it alſo to be the food of this faith---it nouriſhes him, and he grows thereby. He hears, reads, meditates, and keeps on praying to the Holy Ghoſt to write the ſcriptures upon his heart, and to make his life a fare copy of them. And what he thus learns, preſerves him in a ſettled dependence upon the faithfulneſs of God to his word and promiſe. And he is not diſappointed: He finds all the ſcripture which was given by the inſpiration of God is ſtill profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works. This bleſſing he has in his bible. The more he can mix faith with it, the more precious it becomes. His

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bible is his library. The ſtudy therein makes him wiſe for eternity: which is the ſuperlative excellency of bible knowledge, of which Jeſus thus ſpeaks, "Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors: For whoſo findeth me findeth life, and ſhall obtain favor of the Lord."

Thus in the uſe of means he is kept humble and dependent, exerciſing the true goſpel poverty of ſpirit in ſelf-abaſement, and ſo far from being ſtopped that he rather glories and triumphs in his infirmities. The oppoſition which they give helps him forward, they are always driving him out of ſelf to Chriſt, teaching him the neceſſity of the ſupplies of the Spirit, making him more diligent, and keeping him more humble in the uſe of the means: And thus he learns to live more by faith upon Chriſt, and to ſeek more cloſe communion with him, and his fulneſs, eſpecially at his table. He does not abſent himſelf from it, becauſe he has not the fellowſhip there, ſo cloſe, intimate, and abiding, as he could wiſh, or becauſe the laſt time he was there he was not ſo lively as he uſed to be, or becauſe he was unworthy, and full of complaints. He has taſted that the Lord is gracious: And this taſte has increaſed his hunger and thirſt, the food which he wants, he does not carry with him, but he goes to receive it. When he hears his Lord's command—Take, eat this bread---drink this cup---

Do ye this in remembrance of me--He obeys believing the promiſe: This is my body given for you: This is my blood ſhed for you. The more faith in the promiſe, there will be the more appetite, and the more nouriſhment received from the ſpiritual food; for then the Holy Spirit puts his influence into the elements, and the communicant eats the fleſh of Chriſt indeed, and drinks his blood indeed, having by faith communion with him in the bread and wine. At this table the believer is fed, nouriſhed, and feaſted with the bread that cometh down from heaven, even angels' food: for he that eateth of this bread ſhall live for ever: According to the Lord's own promiſe, "Whoſo eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day." The believer has this in his eye, both in what the banquet is now, and in what it is the pledge and earneſt of, when it ſhall be realized. Faith gives a ſubſtance to the things promiſed and hoped for. It has the earneſt and the pledge of them: As certainly as we have the one, ſo certainly ſhall we have the other. A faithful God gives us this ſecurity---Whoſo is one by faith with Jeſus ſhall ſit down at the marriage ſupper of the Lamb: Whoſo eateth and drinketh at his table here in faith, ſhall infallibly eat and drink with him at his table in his kingdom of glory. The ſure and certain hope of this makes our preſent feaſt at

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the Lord's ſupper an happy foretaſte of that eternal banquet, when he will vouchſafe to admit us to the honors of his table, and of his kingdom. O bleſſed, moſt bleſſed time! The proſpect is animating, it brightens the darkeſt day of affliction, refreſhes the ſpirits under the heavieſt trials, and is a rich cordial under the deepeſt feeling of indwelling ſin. Where Chriſt is, all is bleſſed. Union with him is heaven begun, and this the believer is called to enjoy; even to enjoy communion with him in all he is and has. Chriſt is one with him. Chriſt will not leave him nor forſake him: nothing is able to ſeparate the members from the Head. He who has begun the good work has given the fulleſt ſecurity that he will not leave it unfiniſhed. He will carry it on unto the end: For he is faithful who hath promiſed. And the apoſtle applies the words ſpoken to Joſhua, and ſays that they were ſpoken alſo to us, that we might truſt and not be afraid: "This book of the law ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou ſhalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayeſt obſerve to do according to all that is written therein. For then thou ſhalt make thy way proſperous, and then thou ſhalt have good ſucceſs. Have not I commanded thee? Be ſtrong and of a good courage: Be not afraid, neither be thou diſmayed: For the Lord thy God is with thee, whitherſoever thou goeſt." And he went out ſtrong in the Lord, and

in the power of his might. He fought the Lord's battles, and profpered until the whole land was fubdued before him. There failed not aught of any good thing, which the Lord had fpoken to the houfe of Ifrael. All came to pafs. Even fo fhall it be to the whole Ifrael of God. Every good foldier of Chrift Jefus fhall be kept fafe by his almighty power, and under his banner fhall fight the good fight of faith, until he obtains the promifed inheritance, which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, referved in heaven for them. He has taken poffeffion of it in their name, as their furety, and not one of them can perifh: For he keeps the inheritance for them, and them for it: yea, the day is haftening on, when he will prefent all his redeemed unto the Father. "Of thofe whom thou haft given me have I loft none; Behold I, and the children whom thou haft given me."

On all thefe accounts it is evident, that a believer every day, and in every thing, finds matter for the deepeft humiliation. He has ftill a body of fin, remaining corruptions, daily infirmities, and fhort comings. All that he has of his own abafes him in his own eyes: fo that his triumph is never in himfelf. His falvation with all its graces and bleffings depends entirely upon what he is in Chrift. On this foundation he may reft fafely always, notwithftanding he has nothing of his own to glory in. Moft of his miftakes and miferies

miſeries come from his ſeeking to be independent of Chriſt---hoping to find that in himſelf, or in the world, which is only in Chriſt. Self love is unwilling to be beholden to Chriſt for every good thing: It is always trying to put ſome confidence in the fleſh: But the believer is commanded, and is taught to deny ſelf---to put it upon the croſs---and to crucify it daily with its affections and luſts. As Chriſt is exalted, ſelf goes down. As Chriſt is beloved, ſelf is not only denied, but is alſo abhorred. The prophet Ezekiel in the thirty-ſixth chapter deſcribes the very height of the experience of a great believer, who is bleſt with the abundant graces of the Holy Spirit: The reſult of which is, "Then ſhall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doing that were not good, and ye ſhall loathe yourſelves in your own ſight for your iniquities, and for your abominations: Not for your ſakes do I this, ſaith the Lord God, be it known unto you; be aſhamed and confounded for your own ways, O houſe of Iſrael." Such is the genuine working of true grace---It lays the ſinner low at the Saviour's feet, abaſed and humbled to the duſt---Behold, I am vile---I abhor myſelf, and I repent in duſt and aſhes. The ſenſe of God's diſtinguiſhing and ſovereign mercy brings all high thoughts of ſelf into ſubjection to Chriſt Jeſus, and teaches the believer to walk humbly with his God, aſcribing all his ſalvation to the

praiſe of the glory of the exceeding riches of God's grace in his kindneſs towards us through Chriſt Jeſus: That according as it is written, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Thus it is evident, that when the believer looks back upon what he was by nature, or conſiders what he is now by grace, he has nothing of his own to boaſt of, yet even in this continual warfare between the fleſh and the ſpirit, in Chriſt Jeſus he may rejoice even to a triumph, a jubilee of joy. But the grand triumph is yet to come. The beſt glorying in the Lord here is only a prelude to it. Now we have the eſpouſals with our heavenly bridegroom, but then the marriage will be conſummated. Now we are kept waiting in hope for the crown of righteouſneſs, but that will be our coronation day. What a day will it be! What wonders and miracles! The promiſes, exceeding great and exceeding precious, will then have their full and everlaſting accompliſhment by a faithful God, when he ſhall come to be glorified in his ſaints, and to be admired in all them who have believed. When they ſhall ſee him face to face---ſhall be with him where he is---ſhall be like him, and made capableof enjoying the honours, and riches, and pleaſures of his kingdom, in their fulneſs of bleſſedneſs for evermore.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The eternal triumph.

THIS is the great leſſon which the believer is learning, till he comes to the end of his faith---what is promiſed him, and what he hopes to be at the appearing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. This is the centre, to which all his experience tends: And while he keeps it in view, it ſo enlivens and animates his proſpect, that come what may, he goes on his way rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. "Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." And by his holy inſpiration he opens the eyes of the underſtanding, both to underſtand what is revealed, and alſo to know the things that are freely given to us of God: For great as they are, endleſs as they are, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned: But he that is ſpiritual has ſpiritual ſenſes given him to exerciſe upon ſpiritual things---he is made certain of their reality---his faith gives a ſubſtance to the things hoped for, and evidence to the things not ſeen---an hope that never maketh aſhamed---an evidence very

very clear and ſatisfying---ſometimes he can triumph in hope of the glory of God, when the Holy Spirit ſheds abroad in his heart the Father's love, and beſtows great joy and peace in believing. But he who is thus taught of God knows only in part. An apoſtle knew no more. The beſt of our preſent enjoyment is only a foretaſte of the heavenly banquet. But even this little is of ſuch a nature, and has ſuch efficacy, that when it is truly believed, it influences the whole man, while he looks not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen: For the things which are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are eternal. They are not ſeen by the eye of the body, but are viſible by the eye of faith; ſo we read, "Come, taſte and ſee, how gracious the Lord is." By this eye of faith Moſes ſaw him that is inviſible: And this ſight ſo affected him, and had ſuch an influence upon his heart and life, that he lived above the world with all its temptations. This is the victory that overcame the world, even his faith. The ſame ſight ſtill works the ſame effect---producing a real value for ſpiritual and eternal things, and forming the heart to love and to practiſe the apoſtle's rule---My converſation is in heaven, from whence alſo I look for the Saviour the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

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In the ſcripture view of our victory in Chriſt, there are two great points, which will take in all that is revealed of our eternal triumph, namely, The complete conqueſt of all our enemies---and the full and eternal enjoyment of all poſſible good. Theſe two truths come now under our conſideration; and if we can meditate upon them under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and mix faith with his revelation, we ſhall have a good warrant to begin thoſe praiſes, which will never end, and to ſing in harmony with all the redeemed our everlaſting jubilee.

When we come to the end of our faith, even the eternal ſalvation of our ſouls, our victory is deſcribed to be a perfect deliverance from all evil--from ſin, from ſuffering. Sin has brought all pain into the world---miſeries upon the body ---miſeries upon the ſoul---ſpiritual wickedneſs--- numerous hoſts of foes---mighty principalities and powers---it has armed thouſands, yea millions of them for our deſtruction--made us our own enemies by enſlaving us to divers luſts and paſſions, making us the prey to earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh tempers---and as if there was not ſuffering enough in the world, filling us with many imaginary fears, which occaſion real ſuffering. At laſt come the wages of ſin---death with its terrors--- hell with its torments. O what a deliverer! what a deliverance! Not one enemy left. They are all brought under, and ſubdued, to riſe no

more. The Captain of our ſalvation has vanquiſhed them for us. His victory is the earneſt of ours. His was complete, ſo is ours. No ſin, no ſuffering can come near the habitation of his holineſs. Indeed he ſuffered once for ſin, but he put it away by that ſacrifice of himſelf. By faith we have the benefit of his ſuffering, a conſcience purged from guilt, no condemnation left, no charge from any enemy. God himſelf juſtifies, God himſelf ſees us, accepts us, glorifies us, in and with his Son: For in that day he will preſent us to his Father without ſpot of ſin unto eternal ſalvation.

Of this bleſſed and complete victory over all ſin, and all ſuffering, the prophet Iſaiah had a delightful proſpect, ſpeaking of it in theſe words, "And the ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return, and ſhall come to Sion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads; they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away." O give thanks unto the Lord, Jehovah, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever: Let the redeemed of the Lord ſay ſo, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy: They have as much to thank their Redeemer for, as any creature poſſibly can have: His ranſomed were under ſin, helpleſs, miſerable, dying ſinners: From this ſlavery he bought them with an ineſtimable price, and they are become his property, his peculiar people, who have through him liberty

berty to return to God, and to ſerve him without fear on earth, and to bleſs him for giving them freedom to come to Zion, to the city of the living God, with ſongs of gratitude and praiſe: They have everlaſting joy upon their heads---crowned conquerors: They have the joys of heaven, and the gladneſs of eternity in their hearts, which exclude all pain, and all ſorrow---no fear can enter there---not one ſigh. The Lord himſelf is their portion, and they ſhall reign with him for ever and ever.

The beloved John was favoured with a view of the ſame eternal conqueſt which the ranſomed of the Lord ſhall have over all their enemies, and he ſpeaks of it thus, "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, ſaying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they ſhall be his people, and God himſelf ſhall be with them, and be their God: And God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there ſhall be no more curſe, and there ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain: For the former things are paſſed away: And he that ſat upon the throne ſaid, Behold I make all things new." This is Jeſus, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who reigneth, the Lord God omnipotent for this very purpoſe, that this ſcripture may be fulfilled to the uttermoſt, and to eternity. He was the word made fleſh, who tabernacled amongſt

amongſt us, being that moſt holy temple which God pitched and not man: Out of whoſe fulneſs believers receive all grace, and all glory: The compaſſions of Jeſus are like himſelf, infinite and endleſs. He loves his redeemed too well to let either ſin or ſorrow come near them. They might have been holy mourners in their pilgrimage, when they went through the valley of Baca, but now he has wiped away their tears, all tears from their eyes. The curſe that cauſed them he has removed. That death, the wages of which they deſerved, he has changed into life. The pillars in his houſe, which are to get out no more, are thereby delivered from ſorrow, and crying, and from every pain: All the former things are paſſed away—ſin is no more—pain is no more. Into the kingdom of Jeſus nothing of the old man is ſuffered to enter: For he creates all things new. The Lord from heaven makes all his people like himſelf, conformed to his own image in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. A more perfect victory cannot be imagined, than to have enemies ſo vanquiſhed, all enemies, that they ſhall never have entrance into the kingdom of God and his Chriſt. When believers ſhall come to the end of their faith, they ſhall not only be thus ſaved from all poſſible evil, but who can conceive what their actual enjoyments will then be? To be ſaved from all ſin, from all the effects of ſin is a great mercy, yet it is only a

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part of our ſalvation. But looking at the world lying in wickedneſs, beholding the variety of pains and miſeries in it, from which no one is exempt—no ſtate of life free from them—the palace as full of them as the cottage—kingdoms convulſed—infidelity ſpreading its poiſonous influence, and attempting to deſtroy all good order and government—old age bringing its infirmities, and death haſtening—it is certainly a great deliverance, that none of thoſe evils can approach us any more. Bleſſed be God the Saviour for this great mercy. It is through his grace, that his kingdom of glory will be kept in perfect peace, no evil, no fear of evil ſhall for one moment interrupt the happineſs of his ſubjects. But what is this compared to the actual enjoyment of all poſſible good: Who is able to declare fully what this will be at the appearing of Jeſus the great God? We muſt wait for the full manifeſtation of the ſons of God: But yet there is a great deal revealed, which belongs to us and to our children: And if we can read it in faith, with prayer, and with a continual dependence upon the teaching and application of the Holy Spirit, he will give us to form our hearts and lives upon the certainty of what he has revealed: For our converſation will then be in heaven, and we ſhall have both the knowledge, and alſo the experience of heavenly things, growing according to our faith. The word revelation ſignifies taking

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off the veil or covering from any thing, that it may be ſeen clearly: In the ſcripture ſenſe it is removing the veil from heavenly things, which is the work of the Holy Spirit, creating ſpiritual ſenſes to exerciſe upon thoſe heavenly things: Of which the natural man can have no juſt ideas; for he cannot underſtand nor receive the things that are freely given to us of God: But he that is taught of God has evidence given him of the reality and of the bleſſedneſs of thoſe things, which are revealed, and by faith enjoyed. When ſuch an one reads what God ſaid to Abraham, "After theſe things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a viſion, ſaying, Fear not, Abram, I am thy ſhield, and thy exceeding great reward." He reads it for himſelf: He makes the promiſe his own, and truſts in it as ſtedfaſtly as if God had ſpoken it to him by a voice from heaven; For ſo is he warranted to apply it by the apoſtle; now it was not written for his ſake alone, but for us alſo: No ſcripture being of any private interpretation. The gift of grace to Abraham was nothing ſhort of an infinite good---for it was God himſelf: I will be thy God. What is meant by this relation has been largely treated of in the former volumes. It is only needful to add, that it denotes the relation in which the Holy Trinity ſtand to believers, and the covenant engagements to them. God is theirs--He is their Father, the Son is their Saviour, the Spirit of life has enabled

them to receive the Son, and they are one with him, he dwelling in their hearts by faith, and through him they are one with his Father: As the Lord ſaid in his prayer---" Neither pray I for theſe alone, the apoſtles, but for them alſo who ſhall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they alſo may be one in us." This prayer was for all the choſen of the Father, given to the Son, redeemed by him, and in due time quickened by the Spirit, and brought into the ſame covenant relation, and partakers of the ſame covenant bleſſings, as Abraham was. What was promiſed to him, was promiſed to all that walk in the ſteps of his faith, the whole family and houſehold of faith---It is as if God had ſaid, Fear not, believer, I myſelf, Jehovah in Trinity, will be your preſent ſalvation to ſhield you from all ſins and enemies, and I myſelf will be your exceeding great reward. Who can tell what the believer ſhall then be, when this promiſe ſhall be fulfilled? When he ſhall be brought as near to the God-head, as a creature can poſſibly be, joined to the Lord Jeſus by the Holy Spirit, an habitation of God through the Spirit, and through Jeſus unto the Father, and in this holy and bleſſed communion, finding an eternal heaven of happineſs, an exceeding great reward. When it is received in this its fulneſs it is a reward, but of grace, a gift of ſovereign mercy---great, ſomething

thing worthy of the great God---like himſelf---exceeding great, eternally great, O, Holy Ghoſt, keep the hope of it lively: O make it every day more lively, till, through thy bleſſing, I come to know it as it is.

The Pſalmiſt, ſpeaking of this happineſs, ſuits his deſcription to our preſent method of underſtanding ſpiritual things, as they are imaged to us by material. The pleaſures of our ſenſes are made uſe of to give us ideas of that happineſs which is to be found in God: For it is all in him; He is heaven. The enjoyment of him in glory is the heaven of heavens. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs, I ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy likeneſs: For thou wilt ſhew me the path of life, in thy preſence is the fulneſs of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleaſures for evermore." All this, great and endleſs as it is, belongs to them who have God for their God: For when they are admitted into his preſence they ſhall be made like him---O marvellous change---capable of enjoying him, ſo as to be quite ſatisfied---finding in him a fulneſs of joy---pleaſures divinely great, abundant, a river of pleaſures---yea a fountain of pleaſures ſpringing up into everlaſting life. Every ſenſe ſhall be gratified to the uttermoſt, and that for evermore. Bleſſed be God for this unſpeakable gift: And has he not herein vouchſafed us matter of triumph? May not the believer, ought he not,

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to rejoice with exceeding great joy, who has this proſpect before him? Who that is out of heaven can have more reaſon than he has? Survey it, O my ſoul: Take a narrow review of it. Examine over and over again the Pſalmiſt's deſcription of it, and ſee what can be added to make it abſolutely perfect. If nothing can, if it be as full as God can make it, may my heart grow in holy deſires after the glory that is to be revealed, and triumph in the God of my ſalvation.

Our Lord gives us the ſame deſcription in theſe words, ſpeaking to his apoſtles, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me---(in the ſureſt, fulleſt manner that it can be conveyed)---that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and ſit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael." The king of this holy land is Immanuel---God Jeſus: He is the King of kings, the Lord creator of all worlds, and the government of them all is upon his ſhoulders, and the names of his redeemed are written upon his heart. For them he has made abundant proviſion, that they may feaſt with him at his table, and may be receiving out of his fulneſs every grace that can make them completely and eternally bleſſed: For they ſhall ſit down with him upon his throne, and ſhall ſhare with him in all his royalties, bleſſing and adoring him in their everlaſting ſongs of triumph. "Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins

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in his own blood, and hath made us kings and prieſts unto God and his Father: To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*" The apoſtle John calls upon us NOW to begin the heavenly ſong: And he would have us to do it with the ſweeteſt melody in our hearts, praiſing our ſovereign Lord, who has taken our nature into union with himſelf, in order that by his Spirit we might be joined to him our glorified head, and might by faith partake of his holy and heavenly nature. No words can deſcribe more fully the dignity to which by virtue of this union we ſhall be exalted: Nay it is not to be conceived at preſent how great it will be. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the ſons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, becauſe it knew him not: Beloved, NOW are we the ſons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be, but we know, that when he ſhall appear we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is: And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf even as he is pure." O what a dignity is this: What upon earth is to be compared for one moment to it---Sons of God ---Sons of Adam, who have borne the image of the earthly, advanced to bear the image of the heavenly. This is a glory which ſurpaſſeth all underſtanding. It did not yet appear as it is to the beloved John: He knew as much of it, as perhaps ever man did, but it was far greater than

than his knowledge. He knew it but in part: He was indeed ſealed with the Holy Spirit of promiſe, who is the earneſt of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchaſed poſſeſſion. But the earneſt is not the inheritance itſelf. It is only a pledge and a ſecurity, that at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt, the great God and our Saviour, we ſhall be put into full poſſeſſion. At preſent we have it in the promiſe of the God of truth: And faith in its promiſe begets a hope, that will never make us aſhamed: Becauſe it will keep us patiently waiting for the manifeſtation of the ſons of God, when we ſhall come to the eternal enjoyment of all the riches, and pleaſures, and honours of our ſonſhip with Chriſt our glorified Head.

The apoſtle would lead us alſo to conſider the fountain from whence all this bleſſedneſs ſprings, from the Father---what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us. The love expreſſed by this name, Father, has no parallel. It had no beginning, and it will have no ending. It is from everlaſting to everlaſting---bringing with it out of its infinite ocean all the ſtreams of grace, which make glad the city of God, and never ſtopping till it return with all the happy objects of his love to the ſame great ocean again. The apoſtle would have us to behold, and to admire the miracles of the Father's love, which he purpoſed and wrought out, and beſtowed upon *us*, who are ſinners even as others, and

yet to the everlaſting praiſe and glory of his grace--choſen---called---effectually brought into the family and houſehold of faith by the Spirit of adoption, and ennobled---ſons of God---what an exaltation---what a bleſſedneſs! Made the children of God, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt---with him who is Lord of all---admitted to ſhare with him in his kingdom, his crown, his glories: According to his own prayer, "Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me be with me, where I am, that they may behold my glory, may be with me, may be like me. O what an animating view is here for the higheſt rejoicing of faith and hope! Chriſt by taking our nature into union with himſelf has advanced it into the greateſt dignity of which it is capable: For it is heaven to be with him, where he is in his glory; like him, conformed to that ſtandard of all perfection in body and ſoul, perfectly and eternally: What a hope ſhould this beget and cheriſh? even a hope full of glory and immortality! Eſpecially as all this honour is according to the Father's covenant purpoſes: For whom he did foreknow, them he alſo did predeſtinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firſt-born among many brethren: Moreover whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called, and whom he called, them he alſo juſtified, and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified. What ſhall we ſay to theſe things? Can there

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be greater grace ſhewn from the God of all grace? Can there be higher honour conferred, than to be ſo exalted from the depth of ſin and miſery, as to be raiſed to the honours of ſonſhip, even to a conformity to the Son of God. O what ſentiments had that bleſſed man of it, when he ſaid, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs, I ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake after thy likeneſs; for thou wilt ſhew me the path of life; in thy preſence is the fulneſs of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleaſures for evermore." Conformity to Jeſus brings with it this fulneſs of joy; and the hope of it is an active and a lively grace: For every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himſelf even as Chriſt is pure. This is the mark at which the believer aims, he wiſhes to be like Chriſt, and to be more like him: He would feel more of the power of the croſs of Chriſt to crucify in him the body of ſin, and more of the power of the riſen Jeſus, that there may be a real growth into him; and that in all things: Thus he purifies his heart and life by that faith in Jeſus, of which the apoſtle thus ſpeaks, "Brethren, I have not yet attained what I am ſtriving for; but this one thing I do, forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before, I preſs toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.

Theſe are ſome of the ſcripture authorities, from which this concluſion may be fairly drawn, that a believer, whatever view he may take of himſelf, either from what he was, when dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, or from what he now is, quickened by the Spirit of Chriſt, and living by faith, yet crying out under a ſenſe of his corruptions, O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me; yet he may thank God through Jeſus Chriſt his Lord: For he is warranted, he is commanded to rejoice in the Lord always, and to triumph in the God of his ſalvation. And he has enough given him in hand to exerciſe that ſtrong faith, which will adminiſter ſtrong conſolation, even great, very great joy and peace in believing: For the word of God cannot be broken, his promiſes cannot fail, his covenant engagements are immutable, given as infallible ſecurity to the believer, that his faith may not ſtagger at any difficulty, but looking to a faithful God he may go on his way rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

Theſe are ſome of the bleſſed effects of looking to Jeſus, and living by faith upon him and his fulneſs. In this way there is continual matter of triumph. Let the believer look back on what he was by nature, or on what he is now in his renewed ſtate by grace, or looking forward to the glory that is to be revealed at the appearing of his Saviour, when he ſhall be with him in the kingdom

kingdom which cannot be moved, and ſhall be like him, all his members conformed to their moſt glorious Head, and partaking of his divine riches, and honours, and pleaſures, what upon earth can exceed ſuch a proſpect! What can adminiſter greater happineſs, than to have the evidence of it kept clear and open! What can make life more comfortable, and the end of our faith more deſirable, than ſuch great and bleſſed things! promiſed and given moſt freely in time, yea, in the fulleſt manner that almighty love can beſtow them in eternity.

For ſuch mercies bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul; and all that is within me, bleſs his holy Name.

O thou beginning and ending, the firſt and the laſt, the author and the finiſher of the faith, Jehovah Jeſus, I have been looking up to thee for thy divine teaching, and I am ſtill looking up to thee for thy divine bleſſing on this my offering. It is a poor mite, which I would caſt into thy treaſury, as my dying teſtimony for the truth and for the power of thy goſpel. Be pleaſed to accept it out of thine infinite condeſcenſion. Thou knoweſt the heart of thy ſervant: Whatever is right in it is thine own, the work of thine own grace. Failings there are, and they are mine: Of thy mercy pardon them. And make uſe of this little treatiſe, as it ſhall ſeem beſt to thy godly wiſdom, for the increaſe of faith in thy church, and for the advancement

advancement of thine own fame and glory; that more honour may be put upon thy word, more dependence exercifed upon thy faithfulnefs, and there may be a growing conformity to it in the hearts and lives of thy people. Be pleafed, merciful Saviour, to accompany the reading of it with thy Spirit for thefe purpofes, and I fhall be amply rewarded. May thy grace, the grace of our Lord Jefus Chrift, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghoft, be with us all. *Amen.*

THE

THE

SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE

OF THE

SACRAMENT

OF THE

LORD's SUPPER,

BRIEFLY STATED.

Then said Jesus unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. John vi. 53.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following ſhort treatiſe was drawn up at the requeſt of a charitable lady, and publiſhed for the benefit of the poor. The deſign of it was to open to them the nature and uſe of the holy ſacrament: and it was thought the moſt proper method, not to be large and full upon the ſubject, but to lay it before them in one view, that they might underſtand it more eaſily, and remember it the better. Reader, before thou openeſt it, aſk him, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, to accompany thy peruſal of it with his grace and bleſſing: And if it be of any ſervice to thee, give the glory to GOD, and pray for the author.

W. R.

THE

SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE

OF THE

SACRAMENT, &c.

THE ſacrament of the Lord's Supper was ordained by Chriſt himſelf. Before his paſſion he took bread, and bleſſed it, and brake, and gave it to his diſciples, as the outward and viſible ſign of his body broken; and he took wine and bleſſed it, and gave it to them, as the outward and viſible ſign of his blood poured out, and ſhed for the ſins of the world. And then he commanded them, and us, to continue to do the ſame in remembrance of him; ſo that we muſt firſt know what we are to remember of him in this ordinance, before we can keep it aright. We muſt conſider the ſcope and deſign of it; for what end Chriſt left us theſe memorials of

his body and blood; upon what motive he required us to partake of them; and what benefit we are to receive thereby. For these reasons it is of great consequence clearly to understand the nature and use of the Lord's Supper. Reader, I hope thou seest the importance of it in a strong light. May God give thee a right judgment in this weighty matter. Consider then, that

I.

You have an immortal spirit within you, whose life of happiness depends as much upon God the Father of spirits, as your body does upon the food and elements of this world.

MOSES has given us this account of the two parts, of which man is composed. "The Lord "God formed man of the dust of the ground, "and breathed into his nostrils the breath of "life, and man became a living soul," Gen. ii. 7. The bodily part was formed of the dust of the ground, but the spiritual part was immediately infused, and breathed from God; and as they had a different original, so they go to different places; when the body dies, it returns to dust, but the spirit, the breath of life, returns to God that gave it. While man continued innocent, his soul had a life of happiness dependent upon God; for as it is created, it must be dependent, and its life must be supported by that being, on

whom it depends. And this being is God: "For with thee is the fountain of life," says the Psalmist, Psal. xxxvi. 9. All spiritual life flows from God, as from its proper fountain, and is supported by a vital union with him, as much as the body is supported by a vital union with the food and elements of this world: what these are to the life of the body, that is God to the life of the soul, "for he holdeth our souls in life," Psal. lxvi. 9. He holdeth and maintaineth the soul in its spiritual life. And when there was no sin in the world it was an happy life. So long as all things continued very good, the soul enjoyed sweet and blessed communion with God. It walked in the light of his countenance, and the sense of his continual presence filled it with peace, and love, and joy. But this happy state of things did not last long: for

II.

Your soul lost this life of happiness by sin.

THE whole book of God proves this truth. In express words it says, that fallen man is "alienated from the life of God," Eph. iv. 18. being estranged from that life, which God hath given to, and supported in man, while he continued innocent. Upon sin's entering into the world, the sentence took place, *dying thou shalt die*, the body became mortal, and the soul was alienated

alienated from that divine ſupport, wherein its life of happineſs conſiſted, and died from God, which is the worſt kind of death. The vital union between him and the ſoul was broken; "for your ſins have ſeparated between you and "your God," Iſa. lix. 2. they have ſeparated between you and the fountain of life, they have cut off all communion with him; by which means being dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, which we all are by nature, the ſoul is as dead to the offices of ſpiritual life, as a cold lifeleſs corpſe is to the offices of animal life.

If theſe ſcriptures do not appear to you with convincing evidence, conſult matter of fact. How is the caſe with your own ſoul? Was not you by nature dead to God? If not, then you was always alive to the things of God. From your very infancy you took no delight in childiſh diverſions, much leſs in ſin, in pride, in envy, in lying, and ſwearing, or in any act of uncleanneſs; but your heart was full of love to God, and every expreſſion of that love was delightful. You knew no joy like that of prayer. To be continually pouring out your praiſe and thankſgiving to your Creator, was your heaven. The world ſo dead to you, that its ſtrongeſt temptations had no force. Wealth and honor, and pleaſure, and whatever is called great and mighty, had no charms compared with devotion.

Say,

Say, was this always the ſweet and holy frame of your ſoul from the firſt dawning and opening of reaſon? Was your heart always thus full of love to God, and always thus happy in communion with him? Were your affections never drawn away by any worldly objects, whereby you robbed God of that continual ſervice of all your faculties, which was his due? Can you lay claim to this perfect uninterrupted obedience? Surely, you will not: for what man is he that liveth, and ſinneth not? Nay, what man is there that has not found a coldneſs and deadneſs of his affections, when he tried to fix them upon God, and the things of God? Have not you found it in yourſelf? Do you not now find it? Try then to pray for two or three hours together without one wandering thought. You cannot. Why then, theſe are evident proofs, that your ſoul is alienated from the life of God, and

III.

You have no power in yourſelf to recover this life of God in the ſoul.

THE law runs in this ſtyle, *the ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die.* Death is the wages of ſin, *you* have ſinned; for all have ſinned, and God is juſt to give you your wages. He has promiſed them, and he is faithful and true to fulfil his promiſes. He muſt fulfil them, unleſs you can by ſome means be

be reſtored to his favour, and recover the life of grace in the ſoul; for if there be truth in God, *the ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die.* But you can do nothing to merit the recovery of this life, becauſe your whole nature is ſinful and guilty. You are in the ſtate of a condemned malefactor, with this peculiar circumſtance of diſtreſs, that you have not even a deſire to apply for pardon. Your ſoul is ſo abſolutely enſlaved to ſin, that it loves its priſon and its dungeon. Every faculty is under the bondage of Satan, and able to work out nothing but ſin. In this ſtate you are utterly helpleſs and miſerable. " Your condition is " ſuch" (as our church in her tenth article expreſſes it) " that you cannot turn and prepare " yourſelf (and much leſs attain) by your own " natural ſtrength to faith and calling upon " God---the grace of Chriſt muſt go before to " give you a good will, and then work with " you when you have that good will." The firſt good motion of the will comes from Chriſt, even the deſire to live unto God is his free gift, and every ſtep is his work, until the life of God be perfected in the ſoul. He only, whoſe voice is to call the dead out of their graves, can call to the ſinner, and be obeyed, " awake thou that " ſleepeſt and ariſe from the dead, and Chriſt " ſhall give thee life." Chriſt, and Chriſt only, has life to give to the dead in ſin. The fancied light of nature, the religion of nature, morality, learning,

learning, arts, and ſciences, theſe with all other natural and acquired talents, can no more revive a dead ſinner, than they can create a world. The conviction of this truth is abſolutely neceſſary; for you can never apply to Chriſt for the free gift of his divine life, until you be perfectly convinced that you want it, and that you can do nothing to merit it. You can have no motive to apply to him, until you find your own helpleſsneſs, and therefore if you never ſaw your want of this divine life, intreat him to ſhew you your deadneſs in ſin. Beg of him to open the eyes of your underſtanding, that you may be able to ſee in what a wretched dead ſtate you have been all your days, and may be thereby ſtirred up to pray with ſtrong crying and tears to the Prince of life, that he would raiſe you from the death of ſin, unto a life of righteouſneſs: for,

IV.

Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to recover for ſinners that life of happineſs which they had forfeited.

THE ſcriptures are full of this truth from beginning to end. Jeſus Chriſt is there ſet forth as the almighty Saviour and Redeemer, who *giveth life unto the world.* He was the eternal and ſelf-exiſtent God, equal in every perfection and attribute with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and he was pleaſed out of his infinite mercy and love

to be united to our nature, by which union, God and man became one Chriſt; ſo that he who obeyed the law, ſuffered, and died for us, was truly a divine and infinite perſon. By his obedience he atoned for our breach of the divine law; by his ſufferings, he freed us from the puniſhment due to the breach of it; and he died that we might "live through him," 1 John iv. 9. a life of grace in this world, and a life of glory for ever in heaven, whereby what he ſaid of himſelf might be fulfilled; "I am come that they might have "life, and that they might have it more abun-"dantly," John x. 10.

This is the ſcripture account of the gracious method, by which our forfeited life was reſtored. It is the free gift of Jeſus Chriſt, the lord of life and glory. He is the Lord God omnipotent, who created the heavens and the earth, and without whom was not any thing made that was made. He gave us our life at firſt. And when it was forfeited by ſin, he came from heaven to redeem it; ſo that we owe him a double debt of gratitude. It was wonderful love, that he ſhould create us at firſt out of nothing; but more wonderful, that he ſhould come down from heaven to lay down his own life a ranſom for ours. This love ſurpaſſeth all underſtanding. Men, who have never taſted it, can form no eſtimate of it; and they who have taſted it by faith, acknowledge it to be greater than

than heart can conceive, or tongue can utter. However, they know all that can be underſtood of it in the preſent world; for faith receives this ſpiritual life from Jeſus Chriſt. Faith is that divine grace planted in the ſoul by the Holy Spirit, whereby it is vitally united to Jeſus Chriſt, and receives ſupport from him to begin, carry on, and perfect its ſpiritual life, and this brings me to prove that

V.

Faith receives from Jeſus Chriſt the ſpiritual life, which he came to give unto the world.

FAITH, as a Chriſtian grace, is widely different from an hiſtorical aſſent; for it does not only believe that Chriſt has life to give to a ſinful world, but alſo receives it from him. This is eſſential to a true living faith, which is a vital uniting principle, and by which the believer is intimately joined to Chriſt, and draws ſupplies of nouriſhment from him, for the ſupport of his ſpiritual life. The following ſcriptures prove it to be of the eſſence of true faith, to receive this life from Chriſt. "Theſe are written, ſays St. "John xx. 31, that ye might believe that Jeſus "is the Chriſt, the Son of God, and that believ- "ing ye might have life through his name. I "am the reſurrection and the life, ſaith the "Lord:" John xi. 25, "He that believeth in me, "though he were dead, yet ſhall he live; and

" whoever liveth and believeth in me, ſhall " never die;" for he ſhall be as cloſely connected with the root and ſtock of all ſpiritual life, as the branches of the vine are with the root. " I am " the vine," ſaith the Lord of life, " ye are the " branches; as the branch cannot live, and " bear fruit of itſelf, except it abide in the " vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me." By believing, we abide in him; for faith is the bond of this union. It engrafts us into Chriſt, who is the root and ſtock of our ſpiritual life. In him we live; from him we receive nouriſhment, and are enabled to bear much fruit to the glory of God. This is the happy ſtate of Chriſtians, who believe on the Son of God, and have everlaſting life; but miſerable beyond conception is the ſtate of them, who are not united to him; for he that believeth not the Son ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath of God abideth on him, John iii. 36.

Theſe ſcriptures clearly prove, that faith is the hand, which God enables us to put forth, and by which we lay hold of Chriſt, and life in him. The bleſſed apoſtle Paul had happy experience of this doctrine; he relates it in theſe remarkable words, Gal. ii. 20. " I am crucified with Chriſt, " nevertheleſs I live; yet not I, but Chriſt liveth " in me, and the life which I now live in the " fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, " who loved me, and gave himſelf for me."

In this paſſage we have full proof of all the former propoſitions ; as firſt, St. Paul was crucified and dead to ſin with Chriſt, which plainly ſuppoſes him to have been alive to ſin before ; and being thus crucified and dead, *nevertheleſs I live*, ſays he, a life of righteouſneſs and holineſs, but not by any power or virtue in myſelf. No, I could not make myſelf righteous or holy—*Yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me :* he is the author of this life, and faith is that grace, by which we receive and enjoy it ; *the life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* Oh ! happy Paul, who could without preſumption ſay, the Son of God loved *me*, and gave himſelf for *me*. Reader, wouldſt thou not give all the world to be able to ſay the ſame ? Thou wouldſt. Why then, pray to God for the gift of faith, and when he gives it thee, it will make thee as happy as it did Paul. It will let thee know, that Chriſt alſo loves *thee*, and gave himſelf *for thy ſins*. May the ſpirit of grace beſtow upon thee the true living faith, that upon thine own experience thou mayeſt be able to repeat the words after the apoſtle, and ſay, " I am crucified with " Chriſt, nevertheleſs I live ; yet not I, but " Chriſt liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me."

VI.

VI.

In the ſacrament, the body and blood of Chriſt, from which faith receives its ſpiritual life, are repreſented by bread and wine.

IT was the great end and deſign of the Chriſtian revelation to diſcover to us in what method the life, which we had forfeited, was to be reſtored. The knowledge of this is of the greateſt moment. Our happy eternity depends upon it; and therefore God has been pleaſed to teach it us in the plaineſt manner. He has condeſcended to our capacities, and has made uſe of ſenſible objects to explain matters of faith. The ſoul does not ſee at preſent, but through the eyes of the body. Inviſible and ſpiritual things muſt be brought down to our underſtandings by viſible and material: and this is done in the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper. We know that our animal life cannot be ſuſtained without proper nouriſhment, neither can our ſpiritual life; for God has been pleaſed to inſtitute and appoint the meat and drink, which ſuſtain the life of the body, to be the outward and viſible ſigns of that ſpiritual meat and drink, which ſuſtain the life of the ſoul. He has ordained bread and wine, to repreſent to the outward ſenſes the ſpiritual ſupport, which the ſoul receives from the body and blood of Chriſt. And in conſequence of God's ordination.

VII.

VII.

It is as certain a truth, that the body and blood of Chriſt do ſupport the life of grace in the ſoul, as that bread and wine do ſupport life in the body.

MAN, as was before obſerved, in his preſent embodied ſtate, does not ſee ſpiritual objects, but as they are compared with material. The revelation of God in the Old Teſtament and the New, is adapted to man in this ſtate. Objects of faith are repreſented to him by objects of ſenſe. Outward things are ordained to ſtand for inward; and God, who cannot lie, has inſtituted the outward ſign, to give us evidence of the inward grace. He has inſtituted bread and wine, to repreſent the body and blood of Chriſt: and as bread is the ſtaff of the life, it is therefore a juſt picture of the bread of life, which Chriſt brought down with him from heaven; and as wine maketh glad the heart of man, it is therefore a juſt picture of that moſt precious blood, which alone taketh away the ſins of the world, and therefore which alone maketh glad the hearts of ſinners. The bread and wine thus inſtituted, are ſigns to ſet before our ſenſes what Chriſt's body and blood are to do to the ſoul; from whence aroſe the neceſſity of giving the ſame name to the ſign as to the thing ſignified: becauſe what the ſign does to the body, the thing ſignified does to the ſoul. When Chriſt took up the bread, and ſaid, *This is my body*, and the wine, and ſaid, *This*

is my blood, he ſpake the language which the Old Teſtament had always uſed, and the only language which men could underſtand: for it was a received rule in the Old Teſtament to call the ſign and the thing ſignified by the ſame name; and it will always be a received rule, ſo long as men are confined to ſenſe, and cannot ſee ſpiritual objects, but by their material types and inſtituted figures. You cannot ſee how the body and blood of Chriſt ſupport the ſoul, but you ſee that bread and wine do ſupport the body; and the infallible God has engaged his word and truth to you, that there is as true and real ſupport for your ſouls in the body and blood of Chriſt, as there is for your bodies in the bread and wine. He inſtituted the ſign, to ſet before your eyes a picture, both of the life which Chriſt gave, as alſo of the manner in which he gave it: for his death was the purchaſe of your life. His body was ſo bruiſed, wounded, and ſmitten for your tranſgreſſions, that he ſays in the Pſalms, *there was no whole part in it*; therefore the ſacramental bread is broken, and the wine is poured out, as his moſt precious blood was out of every pore and vein. I might trace the likeneſs in many more inſtances, but theſe may ſuffice to ſhew the propriety of inſtituting bread to repreſent the body of Chriſt, which is meat not figuratively or metaphorically, but in deed and in truth; and wine to repreſent the blood of

Chriſt,

Chriſt, which is drink indeed and in truth. Thus far the meaning of the ſacrament, as to the outward and viſible ſign, and as to the inward and ſpiritual grace is plain enough. As a ſign it is generally well underſtood, but then it is not merely a ſign; it is ſomething more: For

VIII.

The bread and wine are not only ſigns, that there is ſpiritual life in Chriſt, but alſo as under a ſeal they convey it.

THIS is the chief part of the ſacrament, and I fear it is greatly miſtaken. To ſet a ſeal to a writing or inſtrument, is making all that is contained in it authentic and valid. When a man ſets a ſeal to an inſtrument he declares, this is my act and deed. So ſetting a ſeal to the elements is a legal conveyance of what they ſignify, and whoſoever receives them under God's ſeal, he verily and indeed receives the body and blood of Chriſt, together with the ſpiritual life purchaſed by them. In this ſenſe St. Paul certainly underſtood the Lord's ſupper; for he ſpeaks of it 1 Cor. x. 16. not only as a ſign, but alſo as a real ſeal. "The cup of bleſſing, which we "bleſs, is it not the communion of" (or that which communicates to us) "the blood of Chriſt? "The bread which we break is it not the com- "munion of" (or that which communicates to us) "the body of Chriſt?" In the cup we communicate

municate and partake of not the mere ſign, but of the blood of Chriſt. In the bread we communicate and partake of not the mere ſign, but of the body of Chriſt: and whoever thus communicates and partakes of the body and blood of Chriſt, to him the outward elements are a ſeal of that ſpiritual and divine life, which Chriſt's body broken, and his blood poured out, were the means of purchaſing for a ſinful world.

IX.

The bread and wine are ſigns to all receivers, but ſeals only to the faithful.

OUR church has determined this point in her 28th article, where it is ſaid, that "the body of "Chriſt is given, taken, and eaten in the ſupper "only after an heavenly and ſpiritual manner. "And the mean, whereby the body of Chriſt is "received and eaten in the ſupper, is faith." Faith is the means of our communicating of the elements in an heavenly and ſpiritual manner; and this faith is the gift of God. His good Spirit alone is able to apply to the hearts of the communicants, the divine ſupport ſignified by the outward elements; and it is his office to make the application, and to give us an intereſt in all the promiſes of the goſpel: for it is certain none but the Holy Spirit of promiſe can ſeal to us a ſpiritual bleſſing. His grace muſt be in the heart,

heart, convincing us of our want of ſpiritual life, and of the neceſſity of ſeeking it from Jeſus Chriſt, before we can perceive any thing more in the elements than bread and wine; and he muſt have given us ſome knowledge of our intereſt in Chriſt, before faith can live and feed upon the body and blood of Chriſt under the outward elements. Sacramental communion is, no doubt, to communicate and partake of the body and blood of Chriſt. But who are able to communicate in this manner? None but believers, who have the eye of faith open to look through the ſigns to the things ſignified. And who enables them to communicate and partake of the things ſignified under the ſigns? The Spirit of God, who dwells in the hearts of believers; and who ſeals to them the promiſes of God made to them in this ſacrament. The neceſſity of his application and ſealing them was ſo evident to the primitive Chriſtians, that at the conſecration of the ſacramental wine the prieſt uſed to mix water with it, which was as if he had declared in ſo many words —— I believe the influence of the Holy Spirit to be neceſſary to apply to our ſouls the merits of Chriſt's blood, and therefore I pour in this water, which is the known emblem of the grace of the Holy Spirit, that no perſon may expect ſpiritual and divine life from the bare receiving of the outward elements: the Holy Spirit muſt be in his heart, in order to make

it

it a ſpiritual ſervice, and to render it the means of conveying ſpiritual bleſſings.

X.

The ſtate of the doctrine from what has been ſaid.

WE are all by nature dead in treſpaſſes and ſins. We forfeited and loſt that life of happineſs, which innocent man enjoyed, while he walked in the preſence of God, and had ſweet communion with him. And we can do nothing to recover this life of God in the ſoul; ſo that if he had left us to ourſelves, we muſt have dragged on a miſerable exiſtence, until the mortal body ſhould have fallen into the grave, and the ſoul ſhould have periſhed for ever from God and glory. But thanks be to the ever bleſſed Trinity for contriving the gracious plan of our redemption. Thanks be to God the Father for ſending the Son of his love to recover the ſpiritual and divine life, which we had forfeited and loſt. Thanks be to the Holy Spirit, who enables us by the hand of faith to receive this ſpiritual and divine life. And thanks be to Jeſus, the prince of life, who was pleaſed to inſtitute bread and wine, to be ſigns to the bodily ſenſes of his body and blood, and to be ſeals to the ſoul when applied by faith. This is the ſtate of the doctrine; from whence it follows, that unleſs you eat of the fleſh of Chriſt with faith, and drink his blood with faith, receiving verily and indeed

under

under the ſigns the things ſignified, then Chriſt himſelf declares, *John* vi. 53. *that you have no life in you*——You have none of that life, which he came to give unto ſinners, but you are as dead to God, and to the things of God, as a lifeleſs corpſe is to the things of this world: for you are alienated from the life of God, and muſt be ſeparated for ever, unleſs faith unite you to Jeſus Chriſt, and give you life through him.

XI.

The application of the whole to three different ſorts of perſons, to them who have not the true living faith in Chriſt, to them who deſire it, and to them who have it.

READER, this is the main point; and thou muſt bear with me, while I aſk thee in the ſpirit of love, Whether thou haſt received this true living faith? Haſt thou an intereſt in Chriſt, and doſt thou know it ſo clearly, that thou canſt truſt all thy concerns in time and in eternity with him? If thy ſoul be not in this happy ſtate, then conſider what danger thou art in. Thou art under the guilt of all thy ſins; the holy, juſt, and good law of heaven has found thee guilty, and thou muſt ſuffer the deſerved puniſhment in ſoul and body for ever. And when an almighty God comes to inflict this puniſhment on thee, wretched man, think, oh think, what will be then thy diſtreſs! Does the apprehenſion of it, while thou art

art reading this, give thee no uneaſineſs? That is an exceeding bad ſymptom; for then ſin has deſtroy'd all motions of grace, and thou art quite dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.

What! may ſome of you ſay, can I, who am alive, and in good health, be in this dead ſtate? Yes, you certainly may, and as you have no living faith, you are indeed in it: for this ſpiritual deadneſs is very conſiſtent with all the offices of animal life. Nay, you may be a man of gaiety and pleaſure, you may be ſeen at all public places, you may be the delight and admiration of the polite world, and yet you may be all the time dead to God, and the things of God; the more alive you are to the world, the more dead will you be to God. As the apoſtle ſays, "She that liveth in pleaſure is dead while ſhe liveth, 1 *Tim.* v. 6. A life of ſenſual pleaſure is a ſpiritual death: ſo that you may be alive and cheerful, and in high ſpirits, and yet the immortal ſoul within you may be all the time dead to God. You may feed and indulge your dear body with good things, and your poor ſoul may be ſtarving. And when this is the caſe, the more flouriſhing your outward condition is, the leſs will you perceive of your ſpiritual deadneſs, becauſe you will go on the more ſmoothly and merrily, until God ſhall ſtop you by ſome ſickneſs, or affliction, or ſhall call you by his word, and ſhall ſend his good Spirit with it to ſpeak to your hearts, "Awake

"Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee life." Oh! that he may awaken thee, reader, if thou art now in the dead ſleep of ſin, and may give thee faith to find life to thy ſoul in Jeſus Chriſt.

But however, until God begin this work, you are not expected at the Lord's table. Until you be awakened, and ſee the deadneſs of your hearts to the things of God, you muſt eat and drink unworthily; for you do not deſire that Chriſt's body and blood may ſupport your ſpiritual life, as the bread and wine ſupport animal life. Without this deſire you *cannot diſcern the Lord's body*, you cannot diſcern any thing more in the elements, than in common bread and wine, and therefore if you partake of them, it muſt be upon ſome wrong motive, becauſe you want the proper diſpoſitions, namely, an humble ſenſe of your want of ſpiritual life, and an earneſt deſire to receive it from Jeſus Chriſt.

In hopes that God will ſend ſome of theſe conſiderations to your hearts with the effectual working of his grace, and ſtir up in you this good deſire, I proceed to apply what has been ſaid to them, who have already this deſire. Reader is this thy caſe? Haſt thou been deeply convinced of thy ſinful and dead ſtate by nature, and haſt thou been led to ſeek life from the free grace of the Lord of life, and art thou now waiting for it in his appointed ways and means? If this

this be thy ſtate, thou art ſafe. Thou art invited, and thou wilt be a welcome gueſt at the Lord's table. Whoever is awakened, and finds his ſoul alienated from the life of God, and is hungering and thirſting for that ſpiritual life, which was purchaſed for him by the body and blood of Chriſt; he will attend upon this holy ordinance. Come, my brother, with full truſt and confidence to this ſpiritual and heavenly feaſt. Lift up thine heart to God in prayer, and deſire thou mayeſt find his preſence in his own ordinance. Be encouraged from the experience of others, who went hungering and thirſting as thou doſt, and he ſent them away filled with good things. Oh! that their caſe may be thine, and ſoon, that thou mayeſt find grace to enable thee to live a life of holineſs, to the glory of thy redeeming God. And to them who have received ſpiritual life from Chriſt, through faith, I make my laſt application.

My Chriſtian brethren, I need not try to ſtir you up to a frequent attendance at the Lord's table. The many ſweet and refreſhing ſeaſons, which you have enjoyed there, weigh more with you than a thouſand arguments. Let me only remind you of the dignity of theſe holy myſteries. Here are the ſigns of Chriſt's body and blood, and the ſeals of the life which we receive from Chriſt's body and blood, in this world and in the next. The faithful now receive

with

with the elements that ſpiritual and divine life from Chriſt, which they are to receive from him in heaven: for here is *the bread which he brought down with him from heaven*, and *the hidden manna*, with which he has promiſed *to feed them, that overcome, for ever and ever*; and for theſe reaſons faith ſets an high value upon the inſtituted ſigns of ſpiritual life, becauſe it receives under them the thing ſignified. Raiſe your devotion from this conſideration. Go with humility to receive the ſigns and ſeals of your ſpiritual and divine life: and may the Lord Jeſus be with you at his own table. May his good ſpirit prepare us all to communicate worthily, that we may ſpiritually eat the fleſh of Chriſt, and drink his blood; that we may dwell in Chriſt, and Chriſt in us; that we may be one with Chriſt, and Chriſt with us; and being thus united, may the body and blood of Jeſus Chriſt preſerve our bodies and ſouls unto everlaſting life. So be it Lord Jeſus. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

A

SEASONABLE ANTIDOTE

AGAINST

POPERY.

IN A

DIALOGUE

UPON

JUSTIFICATION.

BONA OPERA NON PRÆCEDUNT JUSTIFICANDUM, SED SEQUUNTUR JUSTIFICATUM.

PREFACE.

THE papiſts have their emiſſaries every where, and they are vaſtly buſy at preſent. They have more intereſt in this kingdom, and their doctrines have more advocates, than people imagine. Some of their pretended enemies are their beſt friends, and do them the greateſt ſervice. While they cry out, popery, popery, and would make men believe that they are no papiſts, they maintain the fundamental principles of the church of Rome. Theſe were maintained openly in a little piece lately printed at Briſtol, in defence of the popiſh doctrine of juſtification by works.

works. It was given out gratis, and made ſome noiſe. Reader, thou haſt here a faithful copy of this choice performance: That the author of it might have no reaſon to complain of his meaning being miſrepreſented, his words tortured, his ſcope and deſign perverted, it was thought proper to give thee his words at full length. Here they are. Read and admire.

To the inhabitants of the pariſh of St. S——— in the city of Briſtol, this little paper (drawn up with a view towards the prevention or removal of dangerous errors,—the taking away of the groundleſs preſumptions of ſome,—The clearing up the unneceſſary doubts and ſcruples of others,—but at the ſame time, towards exciting the ſerious attention of all, and keeping their conſciences awake as to real duties) is moſt humbly addreſſed by their faithful paſtor,

J———H T———R.

A ſhort and familiar way of explaining the important doctrine of juſtification, and the points dependent on it, agreeably to ſcripture and the church of England.

Juſtification is a law term derived from judicial proceedings, and is oppoſed to condemnation. When applied to perſons in this life, it anticipates the idea of a day of judgment, and declares the happy iſſue of a certain proceſs ſuppoſed to be carried on in the court of conſcience between God and the ſoul.

This being the caſe, when a perſon is brought to the bar, and acquitted by his judge, he is then ſaid to be juſtified; That is, he is declared to be juſt or innocent in regard to the charge laid againſt him. But there is this circumſtance in the Chriſtian, wherein it differs from all other juſtifications, viz. That the juſtified perſon is not only acquitted but rewarded; and this reward is an eternal weight of glory.

Therefore take notice, That the firſt indictment brought againſt you in the court

court of conſcience is,—That you have ſinned, and thereby broke the law of God: And againſt this indictment you can make no defence, but muſt be infallibly caſt, and condemned. For all the world are become guilty; all having ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God. But Chriſt's merits are here pleadable in arreſt of judgment. For when you can make no defence of your own, and would otherwiſe be neceſſarily condemned, you can plead the merits of your ſaviour; and aſſert, That, as far as relates to the covenant of works, or the covenant of a never-failing obedience, you are freed from the curſe and ſentence attending the breach of it, by the mediation of Chriſt, and the imputation of his righteouſneſs. You can aſſert alſo, That this mediation, and theſe merits have obtained for you a covenant of better hopes, one more gracious in its nature, being attended with the aſſiſtance of God's Holy Spirit, and upon all accounts more eaſy for you to perform, viz. The covenant of faith and repentance; to the performance of which a

free promiſe of immortal happineſs is annexed.

The man is therefore brought to the bar a ſecond time; and is then to be tried upon the terms of this new and better covenant, viz. Whether he has ſo co-operated with divine grace, and ſo improved his talent, as to have repentance and preſent obedience towards God, and faith and gratitude towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.—If he has theſe qualifications, his plea is allowed of, his perſon accepted, and he is juſtified: So that were he to die that moment, he would be ſecure in the inheritance of eternal glory. But if he is found deſtitute of true faith and ſincere repentance, his mouth is ſtopped, and he has no plea to make, nor apology to offer.—As to the ſacrifice and ſatisfaction of Chriſt, his merits, his obedience, or imputed righteouſneſs; the conſideration of them will only ſerve to aggravate his guilt, and increaſe his puniſhment, inſtead of leſſening them; becauſe theſe things were never intended to ſuperſede the neceſſity of repentance and a return to obedience, but,

but, on the contrary, to make this repentance and this return to duty become valid and acceptable in the ſight of God; and to purchaſe for them that reward of immortal happineſs, to which the moſt perfect obedience (ſuppoſing ſuch an obedience poſſible) could have no right or claim, without the free promiſes of God in Chriſt.

To ſay more than this concerning the effects of Chriſt's imputed merits is blaſphemous Antinomianiſm; which opens a door for all manner of ſin and wickedneſs, by taking away the neceſſity of perſonal virtue and inherent holineſs, and by making the imaginary transfer of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to ſerve as a cloak for the unrighteouſneſs of mankind.

To ſay leſs is Socianiſm (but one remove from modern deiſm) which deſtroys the idea of a Saviour and redeemer, and ſinks the Chriſtian covenant of grace and mercy into a mere ſyſtem of moral duties.—

Between both theſe extremes lies that happy, goſpel medium, which diſplays the mercy of God to the returning and

repenting

repenting ſinner, and his juſtice on the impenitent and incorrigible.

Hence therefore a rational and ſcriptural evidence of your juſtification; hence a genuine and authentic proof of your being a new creature; and the proper, never-failing credential, that the ſpirit of God dwelleth in you: For, if you have true faith and ſincere repentance, you want no other ſigns or evidences. But if you have not theſe,—To pretend to any other aſſurances, tokens, feelings, or experiences, is vain and deluſive.

Hear therefore the judicious deciſion of our excellent church, as the concluſion of the whole matter,---" Oh, but " how ſhall I know that the Holy Ghoſt " is within me? Some man perchance " will ſay:---Forſooth, as the tree is " known by his fruit, ſo is alſo the Holy " Ghoſt. The fruits of the Holy Ghoſt " (according to the mind of St. Paul) " are theſe, love, joy, peace, long-ſuf- " fering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, faithful- " neſs, meekneſs, temperance, &c. Con- " trariwiſe, the deeds of the fleſh are " theſe, adultery, fornication, unclean-

" neſs,

" nefs, wantonnefs, idolatry, witchcraft,
" hatred, debate, emulation, wrath, con-
" tenfion, fedition, herefy, envy, mur-
" der, drunkennefs, gluttony, and fuch
" like.——☞ Here is now that glafs,
" wherein thou muft behold thyfelf, and
" difcern, whether thou have the Holy
" Ghoft within thee, or the fpirit of the
" flefh. If thou fee, that thy works be
" virtuous and good, confonant to the
" prefcript rule of God's Word, favour-
" ing and tafting not of the flefh, but
" of the fpirit; then aflure thyfelf, that
" thou art endued with the Holy Ghoft:
" Otherwife in thinking well of thyfelf,
" thou doft nothing elfe but deceive thy-
" felf." (The firft part of the Hom. on Whitfunday.)

This is the extraordinary piece, which gave occafion to the following dialogue.

A

DIALOGUE

CONCERNING

JUSTIFICATION.

Believer. HOW do you do, my dear Sir? You are welcome to town. How did you leave all friends at Briſtol?

Enquirer. Sir, I thank you. I left them all well.

Bel. Pray, do you bring us any good news from thence?

Enq. We have nothing very particular at preſent, except that religion is more talked of than any other topic, and we have had ſome ſtir about a little piece printed by our miniſter upon Juſtification.

Bel. I ſuppoſe you mean "The ſhort and "familiar way of explaining the important "Doctrine of Juſtification," which you ſent me up?

Enq.

Enq. Yes. That is it, and have you read it carefully, as I desired you?

Bel. Yes, Sir, at your request I have read it over several times.

Enq. And what is your opinion of it?

Bel. It is indeed short, but far from being familiar, and instead of explaining from scripture this important doctrine, he leaves scripture quite out of the question, leaves the church of England, and all the Protestant churches, and chooses to go to the church of Rome for his account of justification.

Enq. Although this be a very heavy charge against my Dr. yet I dare say you would not lay it, unless you could make it good.

Bel. You know that my charge is not against the man, but against his tenets: For I never saw Dr. T. in my life.

Enq. True! But are you not too sharp and severe in supposing him to be a Papist? I know the man, and he cries out against popery as much as you can do.

Bel. Does he indeed? Then I am sure he does not know what popery is; for he is an open defender of its fundamental doctrine.

Enq. How do you prove that?

Bel. Why! From this very paper of his. He here maintains justification by works, which is the grand heresy of the Papists, and from which their most dangerous errors are derived, and he denies that justification is by faith only, which all

all found Proteſtants maintain, and therefore he cannot be a Proteſtant.

All Proteſtants hold juſtification to be by faith only, but Dr. T. holds juſtification to be by works, therefore he is not a Proteſtant.

And he muſt be a Papiſt, becauſe the grand hereſy of popery conſiſts in holding juſtification to be by works, and Dr. T. holds juſtification to be by works, therefore he is in the grand hereſy of popery?

Enq. But from whence does it appear, that Dr. T. holds juſtification by works?

Bel. It appears from the general ſcope and deſign of this little tract, in which he ſets out at firſt tolerably well, and until he comes near the end of his third paragraph there is ſomething like the truth, but he begins to loſe ſight of it, when he talks "of Chriſt's having obtained "for us a covenant of better hopes, and that "faith and repentance are the terms of this "covenant."

Enq. And are they not?

Bel. No. The ſcripture conſiders faith and repentance as the privileges and free-gifts of the covenant of grace, which the Dr. miſtakes for terms and conditions. And this miſtake runs throughout. He all along ſuppoſes the graces of the covenant to be the terms, and its free gifts and privileges the conditions of it; which is downright popery.

Enq. Do you take the gospel then to be a revelation of grace and mercy, and not a proposal of a covenant of terms and conditions?

Bel. I take the gospel to be glad tidings of salvation for poor sinners, informing them what Christ hath done for their salvation, and how by the obedience of his life, and by the sacrifice of his death, he made a full atonement for sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness; and shewing how the free grace of God applies to them the benefits of Christ's atonement and righteousness, namely, by the Holy Spirit's working in them repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. By the gift of repentance they are turned unto God, and under a sense of their fallen, sinful and miserable state, as transgressors of his holy and righteous law, each of them is constrained to cry out, "God be "merciful unto me a sinner." And to alleviate their distress and to bring peace and comfort to their souls, they are enabled by faith, which is also the gift of the Holy Spirit, to trust in, and to plead the righteousness of Christ only, who is of God made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. And hereby the Believer is entitled to immortal happiness, on account of what Christ hath done for him, the comfort of which he enjoys by what the Holy Spirit hath wrought in him, viz. a believing apprehension and conviction that he has an in-

terest

tereſt in the righteouſneſs of the God-man. This is I think the true goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, which is evidently no covenant of faith and repentance, but a revelation of grace and mercy, and in which we have the free promiſes of eternal life, but not annexed to the performance of faith and repentance, as works of man, or the terms or conditions of the covenant, but to Jeſus Chriſt, and to the perfect obedience, and full ſatisfaction he hath made for ſin: For the gift of God is eternal life through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

Enq. I ſee how widely different your view of the goſpel is from the Dr.'s. He abſolutely inſiſts upon there being ſome terms or conditions of juſtification: Whereas, if I underſtand you right, there are none.

Bel. The goſpel has mentioned none. "Do "this and thou ſhalt live" is the language of the law: Here life is promiſed upon the terms of obedience. Whereas in the goſpel, life is purchaſed for us by Chriſt, and alſo all the goſpel promiſes are freely made through him, and all the goſpel graces are freely given through him, not to be received upon the performance of any previous terms or works, but freely given by the mere grace of God in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.

And the Dr. ſtrangely errs, not knowing the ſcriptures, when he talks of faith and repentance as terms: For I ſuppoſe he means by terms, the

conditions upon the performance of which we are juſtified: But that which is promiſed as a free-gift cannot be received upon the performance of any terms or conditions; and Juſtification itſelf, as well as faith and repentance, are promiſed in ſcripture as free-gifts, conſequently they are not to be received upon the performance of any terms or conditions.

You may read Rom. v. 16, 18. that juſtification is the free-gift of God. So is Faith, Eph. ii. 8. It is the gift of God, wrought in the heart by his operation, and one of the fruits of his good Spirit. So likewiſe is repentance, Acts v. 31. God hath exalted Jeſus with his right hand, to be a prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance. Now ſince faith and repentance are the free-gifts of God, how can they be the terms or conditions of our juſtification? How can they be conditions to qualify us to receive what God gives freely, and according to the pleaſure of his own will? Can you reconcile this difficulty? How can God give that freely, which he does nor give but upon certain terms or conditions?

Enq. But is it not a very common expreſſion among divines, the terms of acceptance? I think I have ſeen a celebrated book with that title.

Bel. You will neither find the expreſſion nor the doctrine in ſcripture, but in direct oppoſition to both, the ſcripture ſays, "We are accepted

" in the beloved," and again, " we are juſtified " freely by grace through the redemption that " is in Chriſt Jeſus." Here we are ſaid to be accepted in Chriſt without any terms or conditions of our own fulfilling. And is it not a palpable contradiction, to ſay that we are juſtified freely by grace, and yet at the ſame time upon certain terms or conditions?

Enq. But are there no terms of acceptance?

Bel. You hear what the ſcripture ſays, " We " are accepted in the beloved."

Enq. What! without any terms?

Bel. Yes, without any terms to be previouſly performed by us to qualify us for Acceptance.

Enq. But how then am I to underſtand the Dr. for he ſays, " the man is therefore brought to " the bar a ſecond time, and is then to be tried " upon the terms of this new and better covenant, " viz. whether he has ſo co-operated with divine " grace, and ſo improved his talent, as to have " repentance and preſent obedience towards " God, and faith and gratitude towards our Lord " Jeſus Chriſt.—If he has theſe qualifications, " his plea is allowed of, his perſon accepted, " and he is juſtified." What am I to think of theſe words?

Bel. You are to think that they contain the grand hereſy of the Papiſts, and they ſtate it as learly as any Dr. of the Sorbonne could have done. For

First, Here we have a man brought to the bar.

Second, His trial is put upon this iſſue—Has he ſo co-operated with divine grace, and ſo improved his talent, as to have repentance and faith, preſent obedience and gratitude?

Third, If he has theſe qualifications, and good works, then he is juſtified, but

Fourth, As the Dr. adds, " if he is found " deſtitute of true faith and ſincere repentance, " his mouth is ſtopped, and he has no plea to " make, nor apology to offer:" From whence it follows,

Fifth, That no man is juſtified without theſe qualifications and good works, they muſt go before his juſtification. All this is downright popery. It is contrary to the whole tenor of ſcripture, contrary to the doctrines of the church of England, and contrary to the Dr.'s own oaths and ſubſcriptions.

Enq. Not ſo faſt, my dear friend. You charge too high. I ſee indeed, that the Dr. does require theſe qualifications beforehand, as previouſly neceſſary to juſtification, but how do you prove this to be unſcriptural?

Bel. I might prove it from the general ſcope and deſign of the ſacred volume, which is to direct ſinners to the righteouſneſs of the God-man Chriſt Jeſus for juſtification, but I refer you to the Epiſtles to the Romans, and to the Gala-

tians, which were written to eſtabliſh this truth, that " a man is not juſtified by the works of the " law, but by the faith of Chriſt," Gal. ii. 16. which excludes all qualifications and works. Rom. iii. 24. God declares, " we are juſtified " freely by his grace, and if by grace, then it is " no more of works, otherwiſe grace is no more " grace."

Again, we read Rom. iv. 5. " To him that " worketh not, but believeth on him that juſti- " fieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for " righteouſneſs." Obſerve how widely St. Paul differs from Dr. T.

Dr. T. ſays a man is not juſtified without certain works and qualifications:

St. Paul ſays, " he is juſtified that worketh " not."

Dr. T. teaches that a man is not juſtified, unleſs he firſt have faith and obedience:

St. Paul aſſerts, that God juſtifieth the ungodly. What faith and obedience has an ungodly perſon?

St. Paul ſends ſinners to Chriſt for righteouſneſs, that they may be made the righteouſneſs of God in him; but

Dr. T. ſends them to their own qualifications and works, without which they cannot be made the righteouſneſs of God in Chriſt.

Moreover St. Paul ſays, Rom. iv. 6. " God " imputeth righteouſneſs without works."

Dr.

Dr. T. denies it, and maintains, that God imputeth not righteouſneſs unleſs there be works and qualifications going before. Now what do you think of theſe ſcriptures? Do they not entirely overthrow Dr. T's notion of juſtification?

Enq. Indeed they appear to me in a ſtronger light, than ever I ſaw them in before; but what do you think of the perſon, who is tried and caſt for want of qualifications?

Bel. I ſuppoſe you refer to this paſſage, "But "if he is found deſtitute of true faith and ſin-"cere repentance his mouth is ſtopped, and he "has no plea to make, nor apology to offer." How widely different is this from the ſcripture ſtate of the caſe, which repreſents the perſons who are to be juſtified freely, as "ungodly, "as working not, as found to be ſinners while "they are ſeeking to be juſtified." Whereas Dr. T. makes them ſaints, before they are juſtified. They have repentance, obedience, faith, and Gratitude, and upon pleading theſe qualifications they are pronounced to be righteous in themſelves, and are juſtified. How oppoſite is this to the ſcripture doctrine, which teaches us that we unrighteous ſinners are made the righteouſneſs of God in Chriſt; but how exactly agreeable is it to the ſentiments of the Papiſts?

Enq. You are ſtill harping upon that ſtring. I tell you again, that Dr. T. is a bitter enemy to popery,

popery, and a ſound friend to the church of England.

Bel. He may call himſelf ſo, but he and the church of England are as wide as the Eaſt is from the Weſt. Her doctrine is founded upon an old maxim, namely, That good works do not go before in the perſon who is to be juſtified, but follow the perſon being juſtified. *Bona opera non præcedunt juſtificandum, ſed ſequuntur juſtificatum.* Dr. T. makes them go before, and thereby forgets what he once ſet his hand to, viz. the 13th Article, the title of which is this——" Of " Works before Juſtification." " Works done " before the grace of Chriſt, and the inſpiration " of his Spirit, are not pleaſant to God, foraſmuch " as they ſpring not of faith in Jeſus Chriſt, nei- " ther do they make men meet to receive grace, " or as the ſchool authors ſay, deſerve grace of " congruity; yea, rather for that they are not " done as God hath willed and commanded them " to be done, we doubt not but they have the " nature of ſin."

Compare Dr. T's paper with this article, and you will ſee that they are diametrically oppoſite. The article ſays—Works done before juſtification, have in them the nature of ſin, the Dr. once ſet his hand to this doctrine, but now he writes againſt it, and ſays, that they have in them the nature of merit, for they are qualifications indiſpenſably neceſſary to juſtification. Let a whole college

college of Jeſuits reconcile theſe contradictions if they can.

Enq. Truly I cannot ſee how they can be reconciled. But have good works no place in our juſtification?

Bel. No, none at all; for works done before juſtification, all Dr. T's qualifications have in them the nature of ſin, according to our church.

Enq. How am I to underſtand this doctrine?

Bel. Hear what our church ſays of it in the ſecond part of the Homily on Salvation. "The "true underſtanding of this doctrine, we be juſ- "tified freely by faith without works, is not, "that this our own act to believe in Chriſt, or "this our faith in Chriſt, which is within us doth "juſtify us, and deſerve our juſtification unto us "(for that were to count ourſelves to be juſtified "by ſome act or virtue that is within ourſelves) "but the true underſtanding and meaning there- "of is, that although we hear God's word, and "believe it, although we have faith, hope, "charity, repentance, dread and fear of God "within us, and do never ſo many works there- "unto: Yet we muſt renounce the merit of all "our ſaid virtues, of faith, hope, charity, and "all other virtues and good deeds, which we "either have done, ſhall do, or can do, as things "that be far too weak, and inſufficient and im- "perfect, to deſerve remiſſion of our ſins, and "our juſtification." Is not the meaning of theſe words

words very plain and clear, and what can the Dr. object to them? If he denies their authority, what becomes of his oaths and subscriptions? If he allows of it, how can he insist upon faith, repentance, &c. as qualifications requisite to our justification, after the church has absolutely excluded faith and repentance by name, and all other virtues and good deeds from deserving any part of our justification? How does this reasoning appear to you?

Enq. Why! really, it is decisive. I did not think you could have brought such convincing proofs, but I am now satisfied that our justification is not from any works which we have done, can do, or shall do; yet there is a difficulty still sticks with me.

Bel. Pray what is it?

Enq. It is this. Does not your doctrine of justification supercede the necessity of repentance and return to obedience, as the Dr. expresses himself?

Bel. Don't call it my doctrine. It is the doctrine of scripture, and of the church of England: For you know we are taught, that Christ was exalted to be a prince and a saviour for to give faith and repentance, even that faith which worketh by love; and how then can this doctrine supercede the necessity of faith, repentance, and return to duty, since Christ always gives these Graces to those persons whom he justifies?

Enq.

Enq. But certainly this doctrine does supercede the neceſſity of repentance and return to duty.

Bel. No, far from it. It only ſupercedes them as qualifications for our being juſtified: For the ſcripture and our church allow of no qualifications or conditions. And the Dr. without intending it, has fallen into their opinion; for in direct contradiction to what he had been maintaining, he ſays, "That the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt, was to make repentance and "this return to duty, become valid and acceptable in the ſight of God;" from whence I argue upon his principles, that without this imputed righteouſneſs they would not be valid nor acceptable, and if not valid nor acceptable, how could they be neceſſary qualifications for our juſtification? How could that make us accepted, which was itſelf not acceptable? So that here we have J———h againſt T———r boldly contradicting him to his face.

Enq. Surely you muſt miſrepreſent the Doctor.

Bel. No, my good friend, I do not. Look at the paper. See, here are the very words. Read them over.

Enq. Well, I proteſt, I could not have thought Dr. T. would have contradicted himſelf in ſuch a palpable manner. I'm ſorry for him.

Bel. Sorry! Ay ſo you ought. If you are ſorry for his falſe reaſoning, how ſincerely ſorry ſhould you

you be for his falſe doctrine? For the ſcripture teaches, that our perſons are juſtified, and the church aſſerts that we are accounted righteous, through the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. But Dr. T. aſſigns the obedience, ſacrifice, ſatisfaction, and imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt, no other place than to make our works valid and acceptable, and to purchaſe for THEM—(what! for righteouſneſs and return to duty? Yes, for I find no other caſe to agree) the reward of immortal happineſs. I could never find in ſcripture, that all that Chriſt did and ſuffered, was to make our repentance, and return to duty, valid and acceptable in the ſight of God, or that he came into the world to purchaſe the reward of immortal happineſs for repentance and return to duty; but I read often of his giving himſelf for ſinners, of his dying to atone for ſin, and of his purchaſing eternal life for them that were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins. Can you reconcile this with the Dr.'s notion of Chriſt's righteouſneſs making our obedience and return to duty valid and acceptable?

Enq. No, indeed, I cannot, and am ſorry the Dr. ſhould maintain things ſo abſurd and unſcriptural.

Bel. I am glad you are already ſorry for him, you will have more reaſon, when I come to his next paragraph. There he affirms—" that to " ſay more than this concerning the effects of " Chriſt's

" Chriſt's imputed merits; to ſay more than that " our good works qualify us to receive Chriſt's im- " puted merits is, he ſays, blaſphemous Anti- " nomianiſm." But the ſcripture and our church ſay more, therefore the Dr. calls the ſcripture, and our church, blaſphemous Antinomians, and he ſays their doctrine " opens a door for all " manner of ſin and wickedneſs, by taking away " the neceſſity of perſonal virtue and inherent " holineſs." The ſcripture abhors the Dr.'s charge, What! ſhall we make Chriſt the miniſter of ſin? God forbid. Our church enters her proteſt in the 3d part of the Homily on Salva- tion, in theſe words: " How can a man have " the true faith, ſure truſt and confidence in " God, that by the merits of Chriſt his ſins be " forgiven, and be reconciled to the favour of " God, and to be partaker of the kingdom of " heaven by Chriſt, when he liveth ungodly, and " denieth Chriſt in his deeds?" And as to theſe unſcriptural terms, perſonal virtue and inherent holineſs, they are brought in to be a kind of contraſt to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and to throw contempt upon it. You know my opinion of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and you can imagine how ſenſibly I muſt have been affected at the reading of the next words. I declare my blood run cold, and I even now ſhudder at the repeat- ing them—Lord grant they may never be laid to the Dr.'s charge---" And by making the imagi- " nary

" nary transfer of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to ſerve " as a cloak for the unrighteouſneſs of man- " kind."

Enq. My dear Sir, what offends you herein ſo mightily? What neceſſity for this great outcry?

Bel. Don't you ſee the reaſon? Is not that righteouſneſs here trampled under foot as a mean and vile thing, in which the Lord's people here below, and above, appear before him without ſpot of ſin unto ſalvation? For

Firſt, It is here aſſerted, that to ſay a man is juſtified by Chriſt's righteouſneſs without works, is deſtroying perſonal virtue and inherent holineſs.

Secondly, That the transfer of his righteouſneſs ſerves as a cloak for the unrighteouſneſs of mankind, and

Thirdly, That the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which the Dr. treated before as a real thing, he now treats as an imaginary thing.

Enq. Does he indeed? What does he call Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs imaginary?

Bel. Yes, he does not mince the matter, but treats it as a fable; the righteouſneſs of God he treats as a mere imagination. He once indeed thought it a real thing, and ſet his hand to the truth of it, and he ſtill acts in the miniſtry in conſequence of his ſubſcription to the thirty-

nine

nine articles, although he now writes againſt the 11th, "Upon the Juſtification of man," which ſays---"We are accounted righteous before God ONLY, for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, by faith, and not for our own works or deſervings." What do you think of this article? Does it not ſay more than the Dr. does? And is it then blaſphemous Antinomianiſm? Is it opening a door to all manner of ſin and wickedneſs, to ſay that we are accounted righteous ONLY through Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs? Anſwer me, my friend.

Enq. Indeed this article has ſtruck me. That word ONLY is an anſwer to all the Dr.s paper. I now ſee clearly the Dr. is in the wrong, and I thank you heartily for convincing me of it. I underſtand how free and full the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is, and that it is imputed to the ungodly, who have no qualifications, no good works, no perſonal virtue, nor inherent holineſs. And I pray God, I may be found in Chriſt not having my own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith.

Bel. I have reaſon to be thankful if my diſcourſe has been of any uſe to you. I have ſpoken freely, and more ſo, as I know not the Dr. and cannot be ſuppoſed to have any diſlike to him. If ever you ſhould bring him into my company, I would ſpeak more freely to him, than

than I have of him; both for the ſake of his own ſoul, and of their ſouls who are committed to his care. I doubt not but I could convince him, that his general inference, which begins thus, " hence therefore, a rational and ſcriptural " evidence of your juſtification, is neither ra- " tional nor ſcriptural. If you have true faith " and ſincere repentance, you want no other " ſigns or evidences, ſays he, of your juſtifica- " tion." Obſerve, this faith and this repentance are to go before as qualifications for our being juſtified, and conſidered in this reſpect, our church ſays, they have in them the nature of ſin, and therefore they are no ſigns or evidences at all. " But if you have not theſe" (as the Dr. adds) " to pretend to any other aſſurances, tokens, " feelings, or experiences, is vain and deluſive." Does he know any one who maintains, that a man may be in a ſtate of juſtification, and yet have no faith or repentance? I do not hear of any perſon who maintains this; but I know ſome who talk of certain marks and evidences attending true faith, which the ſcripture has promiſed, and theſe muſt not be diſcarded as vain or deluſive: For the ſcripture has promiſed us the aſſurance of faith, as the gift of God, and to be wrought in us by the operation of God, and mentions the earneſt or token of the Spirit, and ſpeaks of feeling after the Lord and finding him, yea, feeling in ourſelves the working of the ſpirit of

of Chriſt, as our church expreſſes it in article 17, and in another place, feeling our conſciences at peace with God through remiſſion of our ſin (third part of the Homily for Rogation Week) and feeling this with ſo much certainty, that we can tell our experience with David---" Come " hither, and hearken, all ye that fear God, " and I will tell you what he hath done for " my ſoul." So that we muſt not reject all tokens, feelings, and experiences, as vain and deluſive.

Enq. Doubtleſs there is ſuch a thing as the aſſurance of faith, and I pray God I may attain it.

Bel. God grant you may. And now let me aſk you---Does it not appear to you upon the whole, that the Dr. was greatly miſtaken even in the very title of his paper? for he has been eſtabliſhing groundleſs preſumptions inſtead of taking them away, giving farther handle to unſcriptural doubts and fears, inſtead of clearing them up, and lulling conſciences aſleep upon the ſandy foundation of human righteouſneſs, inſtead of building upon Chriſt the rock of ages for righteouſneſs to juſtification, and for true holineſs of heart and life. His notions are oppoſite to ſcripture, and inconſiſtent with the determinations of the church of England, and therefore they come under one of the marks of the fruits of the fleſh enumerated by St. Paul, and quoted by

by the Dr. from the Homily---namely HERESY. Are theſe things ſo?

Enq. Indeed they appear to me with ſuch full conviction, that I need not trouble you about the laſt part of his paper: For I now ſee plain enough, that his quotation from the Homily is nothing to the purpoſe, becauſe it only ſays, that when the Spirit of Chriſt is within a man, he will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, but the Homily does not maintain with the Dr. that theſe fruits will juſtify us.

Bel. No, far from it. The doctrine of the Homilies is this:

The righteouſneſs for which a ſinner is accounted righteous before God, is the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt.

It was not the end of Chriſt's fulfilling all righteouſneſs to make repentance and return to duty valid and acceptable, nor yet to purchaſe for repentance and return to duty the reward of eternal happineſs; but he fulfilled all righteouſneſs, that our perſons might firſt be made righteous, after which our works would be acceptable. And

Accordingly we never read of his righteouſneſs being imputed to them who have repented and returned to duty, but it is ſaid to be imputed to the ungodly, to him that worketh not, without any qualifications or conditions.

Faith is the hand which apprehends, or the inſtrument which applies Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs, and thereby juſtifies.

This juſtifying faith is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

He gives us evidence of our being juſtified, by bearing his teſtimony with our Spirits, that we are the children of God, and

By enabling us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.

Theſe fruits do not juſtify us, but prove us to be juſtified, as the fruits upon a tree don't make it alive, but prove it to be alive.

Enq. I heartily aſſent to theſe truths, and I deſire to experience the comfort of them in my own ſoul.

Bel. I am glad to leave you in this ſweet frame of mind. I wiſh all our Briſtol friends were in your way of thinking.

Enq. I promiſe you, it will not be my fault, if they be not. I will do my endeavour to convince them.

Bel. I hope God will proſper your endeavours, and give his bleſſing to your magiſtrates and people; may they love Chriſt and his righteouſneſs; may your clergy, and Dr. T. among the reſt, preach Chriſt, and teach men to ſubmit to his righteouſneſs; and may Chriſt pour his choiceſt bleſſings upon the City of Briſtol, that it may be celebrated through the earth, for the City of righteouſneſs, the faithful City.

AN EARNEST

INVITATION

TO THE

FRIENDS OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH,

TO JOIN,

With several of their Brethren, Clergy and Laity, in London,

IN SETTING APART

ONE HOUR OF EVERY WEEK,

FOR PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION, DURING THE PRESENT TROUBLESOME TIMES.

Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Psalm l. 15.

THE

PREFACE.

1. IN the beginning of the laſt war providence ſeemed to take part with our enemies. We wanted unanimity in our public councils, and ſucceſs in our public meaſures. One miſcarriage followed another. Our national courage ceaſed to exert itſelf, and a general dejection of ſpirits enſued. At this time ſeveral clergymen of the eſtabliſhed church agreed to meet at the throne of grace on the Lord's-day. The ſubject of their joint prayers was to aſk the bleſſing of God upon our public councils, our fleets, and our armies. They were ſoon joined by a great number of the laity in moſt parts

of the kingdom. Afterwards ſeveral praying ſocieties were formed for the very ſame purpoſe in Germany, and eſpecially in Hanover. In the ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication they humbled themſelves before the Lord: they ſought ſucceſs at his hands, and he was gracious to their requeſts; he ſent victory after victory, until our enemies were willing to be at peace, and then they gave him unfeigned thanks, and aſcribed all the glory to his goodneſs and power.

2. The principles upon which they then acted were theſe. They believed in the being of God, the Lord and Maker of all worlds. They acknowledged his providence over his works; for he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. His kingdom ruleth over all, every perſon and every thing; And none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, What doeſt thou?

3. They believed alſo, that in the courſe of his providence, he acts by an infinitely wiſe rule, which he has made known to us in

in the holy ſcriptures. He is the Almighty Creator, and ſovereign Lord of mankind, and he has given them a law, which is holy, juſt, and good. Every tittle of it is not only for his glory, but alſo for their profit. He has ſecured obedience to it by promiſes and threatenings, neither of which can fail. His word cannot be broken, either to the obedient or diſobedient. According to his revealed will his love infallibly follows the one, and his juſtice the other.

4. This is true of ſocieties, as well as of private perſons. Sin is alike the tranſgreſſion of the law, and deſerves in many or in few the threatened puniſhment; but according to the number, it becomes more poiſonous: becauſe it ſpreads its infection by example. When the multitude agree to do evil, the reſtraint of ſhame is taken off. If the times ſhould favor them through much luxury, and great licentiouſneſs, they harden one another in ſin. Then general diſſipation and falſe pleaſure take poſſeſſion of the heart. Theſe hinder the mind from being cultivated with any profitable knowledge. The

The ſound principles of religion become neglected, and as theſe grow out of faſhion, immoral practices muſt prevail. The authority of God is caſt off: his word, his ſabbaths, his ordinances, are firſt diffuſed, and then by degrees deſpiſed. Thus infidelity gets deeper root, and immorality, which is its natural fruit, become luxuriant. The reſtraint of the divine law being taken away, human laws loſe their force upon the conſcience: for when the fear of God is gone, there is no motive left ſufficient to influence the heart or conduct; men will then venture to ſin without any ſenſe of danger, even of death itſelf. And when national ſin is come to this height, God has declared in his word, and by the conſtant courſe of his providence has made it manifeſt, that he will interpoſe to maintain the honour of his law and government. When men have thus deeply corrupted themſelves, he will remember their iniquity, he will viſit their ſins: "Shall I not viſit for theſe "things, ſaith the lord, ſhall not my "ſoul be avenged on ſuch a nation as "this?"

5. When

5. When God arises to vindicate his authority, he is never at a loss for means. All creatures are ready to execute his judgments, which are the more fearful, because in his hands, irresistible. Among them war is one of the most severe and desolating: it is one of the sore visitations of God, as Ezek. xiv. 21. which does not come by chance, but by his command: and he sends it, Amos ix. 4. to plead his controversy. It is the just appointment of his providence to vindicate his broken law, and his despised government. It is his wise interposition, either to correct for those things, or to destroy. When it is the loving rod of correction, it humbles: it brings the sinner upon his knees; he repents, he turns from the error of his ways, and is reformed by the visitation. When it comes to punish, he gives warning before the blow; but the people sin on, they fear not the sword, nor him who sent it: then it vindicates the righteous quarrel of the Lord upon impenitent sinners. It strikes at every thing truly valuable, liberty, property, yea life itself. This scourge is now

now ſent, and felt; ſent by the divine providence, and felt, yea ſorely complained of, but not as it ſhould be; not with ſubmiſſion to the juſtice of the viſitation, but with murmuring; not with turning from ſin, but with returning to it with more hardineſs and greater greedineſs.

6. This was our ſituation when we entered upon the war in 1756. Conſidering ourſelves as Chriſtian miniſters, we ſaw our duty, and what part it became us to act, as good citizens. We had read the promiſes of God made to thoſe, who at ſuch times ſeek his help, and implore his bleſſing. We had ſeen thoſe promiſes fulfilled: we in earneſt purſued the means of his own appointing, and we met with the deſired end: he humbled us at his footſtool; we aſked pardon for our national departure from the living God; we implored his mercy through Chriſt; and he heard prayer, he anſwered prayer, and we glorified him.

7. The uſe of the ſame means is now again recommended; (Dec. 1778,) the

ſame

ſame occaſion calls for it, and we have the ſame encouragement. The promiſes, and the examples in ſcripture, warrant us to expect the ſame ſucceſs. May the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication be poured out abundantly upon miniſters, and people, that multitudes may uſe the means, until God ſend us a bleſſed iſſue: yea, may he turn to us in mercy, and turn us as a people unto himſelf, with repentance and faith. The cloud may be dark which hangs over our heads; it may threaten a deſtroying ſtorm; it may ſpread blacker, and look more dreadful: yet prayer can pierce through the cloud; the prayer of faith can gain admittance into his preſence, who has his way in the whirlwind, and who preſides over the ſtorm. The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous was heard; the cloud was diſperſed, and the face of the heavens again ſerene and peaceful. O for another army of ſuch ſupplicants! What cannot they do! calling for, and truſting to, the help of the Almighty? This is our ſpiritual armour, and more uſeful than the arm of fleſh: may

may as many uſe the one, as uſe the other. And now the hoſts is gone forth againſt the enemy, may we at home follow them and aid them with our prayers, never ceaſing, until God reſtore peace to the earth, and good will between us and all our public enemies.

The following little tract was made very uſeful in all the former wars from the year 1756, and has gone through a great number of editions. I have been called upon by ſome perſons, on whoſe judgment I depend, to reprint it; in hopes the ſame bleſſing may attend it. How greatly is it to be wiſhed, that it may ſtir up thouſands to humble themſelves under the mighty hand of God, and to ſeek his help in this time of need. If we do it in earneſt, we need not deſpair. The ſame means will bring about the ſame end. May we uſe the means, and pray on, till God ſhall hear and anſwer.

W. R.

AN

EARNEST INVITATION,

&c. &c.

MY CHRISTIAN BROTHER,

GOD has declared, that when a land ſins againſt him by treſpaſſing grievouſly, then he will ſtretch out his hand upon it, and viſit it with his four ſore judgments, the ſword, the famine, the noiſome beaſt, and the peſtilence. Theſe he ſends to puniſh the land for its grievous treſpaſſes. He has viſited us with ſome of his ſore judgments, and therefore our land has treſpaſſed grievouſly. And if we continue to provoke him, and refuſe to receive correction, he will continue theſe puniſhments; and it is to be feared, if we remain hardened and impenitent under them, he will at laſt give us over to the deſtroyer.

The preſent circumſtances of our public affairs are exceedingly awful and alarming. Our danger is confeſſedly great. Our enemies are many and mighty

mighty, and our numerous ſins are in their intereſt. Every ſin helps them to deſtroy us; and God has been thus far on our enemies ſide. He has been by them puniſhing our ſins, and yet with a ſtrange infatuation we ſin on ſecurely, as if we did not apprehend, that continuance in ſin would certainly cauſe the continuance of our calamities. And dreadful it is to ſee how ineffectual all the former judgments have been to reform us. Still our people refuſe to deny themſelves their diverſions and their vices. And the ſeaſon of the year is come, when without any reformation at home, we are going to ſend out our fleets and armies againſt our enemies abroad, vainly flattering ourſelves with hopes of ſucceſs, while our ſins ſet God at defiance, and make him continue to fight againſt us with his almighty power.

If then our people have not been reclaimed by paſt judgments, and conſequently greater muſt be expected. What is to be done? What can true believers do, but uſe their intereſt with God in prayer? We have no other expedient left. If our people won't plead with God for themſelves, let us plead for them. Our encouragement is great; we have many ſweet promiſes in ſcripture to rely upon. There is one in Solomon's prayer, which ſuits our caſe exactly (2 *Chron*, vi. 24, 25), "And if thy people *Iſrael* be put to the worſe before the enemy, becauſe

they have ſinned againſt thee, and ſhall return and confeſs thy name, and pray, and make ſupplication before thee in this houſe, then hear thou from the heavens, and forgive the ſins of thy people." There never was an inſtance wherein God acted contrary to the method here mentioned. Whenever a people turned to him and confeſſed their ſins, he turned away from his fierce anger. If they called upon him in the day of trouble, he heard and anſwered. If they put their truſt in him, he maintained their cauſe.

Several miniſters of the eſtabliſhed church from the conſideration of our danger, and ſeeing no remedy more effectual than prayer and ſupplication, have reſolved to ſpend part of every Lord's Day in this holy exerciſe. They have choſen this day, partly for the ſake of the day itſelf, being a day ſacred to religion, and becauſe they wanted to have the joint prayers of thoſe perſons, who might be hindered on other days, but who were now entirely free from worldly avocations: and they have choſen to ſpend from eight to nine o'clock in the evening, becauſe it is the time that could be beſt ſpared from the duties of the day, and becauſe after attending upon public worſhip, the mind would be better diſpoſed for private worſhip—prayer, and the word, and the ſacraments, having put the ſoul into a proper frame to humble itſelf before God, firſt for its own ſins, and then for the ſins of the nation.

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We earneſtly requeſt our brethren of the eſtabliſhed church, and all our fellow Chriſtians to join with us in this religious deſign. It is a ſeaſonable, and a pious requeſt that we make: and we hope no perſon, who has the ſpirit of prayer, and who is a lover of the proteſtant religion, and of our eſtabliſhment, will be prevented by any ſlothful or needleſs excuſe, from offering up his petitions along with ours at the appointed hour; but that all the faithful ſervants of God in every part of the land will be at the ſame time, as one congregation, preſenting their prayers before the throne of grace. Oh how much to be deſired, how good and joyful a thing would it be, to ſee brethren thus praying together in unity. May God put it into the hearts both of miniſters and people thus to pray in ſweet agreement, at one time, and with one heart, until God hear and anſwer, and deliver this church and kingdom out of their dangers and troubles.

The firſt part of the duty, which is incumbent upon us at this time, conſiſts in humbling ourſelves before God, under a deep ſenſe of thoſe ſins which have provoked him to ſend down ſo many heavy judgments upon our land, in confeſſing thoſe ſins with a godly ſorrow, and in turning from them with a repentance not to be repented of. And that we may all be ſtirred up to a due diſcharge of this duty, we ſhould be fully perſuaded that our public calamities come

from our ſins. God is angry at nothing but ſin. Every man therefore ſhould look into his own heart, and ſee what great reaſon God has to be angry with him, and accordingly to humble himſelf under the mighty hand of God, that he may pardon him and exalt him in due time.

Let each of us then at the appointed hour retire from the world, and in the preſence, and before the footſtool of the ſovereign Creator and Redeemer, examine what grounds and reaſons we have for deep humiliation. And

First, We have great reaſon to mourn and be afflicted before him for the ſinfulneſs of our nature, which is the fruitful parent of all our actual ſins. We have corrupted ourſelves in every faculty of ſoul and body; and the ſight and feeling of this corruption ſhould give us the moſt humbling views of our ſinful, loſt, and helpleſs condition: for by this fault and corruption of nature, every man naturally engendered of the offſpring of *Adam* is not only far gone from original righteouſneſs, and of his own nature inclined to evil, ſo that the fleſh luſteth always contrary to the ſpirit, but alſo deſerveth God's wrath and damnation. How can we believe ourſelves to be thus conceived and born in ſin, thus by nature the children of God's wrath, and not be deeply humbled? What can be matter of greater humiliation, than to conſider how low we are fallen, that we have loſt original

righteouſneſs, have loſt the image of God, have loſt his love, and favour, and grace, and have loſt all hope, as to any thing we can do, of his glory? Let us then begin with lamenting the ſinfulneſs of our nature, which is the fountain of all ſin. Let us beg of God to cleanſe it by the blood of Jeſus, and to renew us daily by the grace of the Holy Spirit, that we may put off the ſinful nature, the old man with his deeds, and may put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.

Secondly, We have great reaſon to be humbled for the ſinfulneſs of our lives. God requires nothing of us, but what is for his glory, and for our happineſs. His law is holy, juſt, and good; but how often have we broken it, in thought, word, and deed—how preſumptuouſly—after how many ſolemn vows and reſolutions—againſt the light of conſcience—againſt the light of the goſpel—ungratefully, after receiving numerous mercies—hardened in ſin, after being viſited with heavy judgments? Who amongſt us is not deep in guilt in theſe reſpects? Let us look back upon our paſt lives, and remember, wherein we have particularly offended. Let us recollect our ſins of commiſſion againſt God's holy law, and our ſins of omiſſion, with the aggravating circumſtances attending them; and then, conſidering how injurious the leaſt of theſe things was to the glory of God, let

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us be humbled to the very duſt: For the ſcripture is clear, and expreſs, "that we have all ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God," we have robbed him of his glory. Now it is our duty, as Chriſtians, to live to the glory of God, and to have a ſingle eye to his glory, even in the common affairs of life, when we eat or drink, or whatever we do. Have we then at all times, and in all things, had a ſingle eye to God's glory? Oh guilty, guilty, muſt we all plead to this charge; with ſhame and confuſion of face muſt we confeſs, that we have not ſpent all our lives to God's glory! ſeldom have we had an eye to it; and when we had, very rarely have we indeed promoted it. And after we have thus taken an humbling view of our ſinful nature, and of our ſinful lives.

THIRDLY, Let the conſideration of our national wickedneſs humble us ſtill lower before God. Chriſtianity is the religion profeſſed in this country. Ours is a reformed church. We are a free people. God continues to us the light of his goſpel. We have his word and his ordinances, and all the bleſſings of the eſtabliſhment. We are highly favoured above all the nations on the earth. Now to whom much is given, of them men always require the more, and ſo does God. He requires more of the profeſſors of Chriſtianity, than of the ignorant heathen. But do we make him more returns of love and obedience, than

they do? Look around the kingdom, and judge. You will find in ſeveral parts of this land, as great ignorance of the life and power of Chriſtianity, as in the deſerts of *Africa*. What diſtant corner of the kingdom has not heard the blaſpheming tongue ſpeaking treaſon againſt God our Saviour? And where is the happy village free from open and ſcandalous immoralities? Here is our condemnation, that light is come into the world, and ſhines among us, and yet we love darkneſs rather than light. This makes our ſins exceeding ſinful, that Chriſt came to deſtroy the works of the devil, and yet they abound among us. To repeat theſe works by name would be tireſome; to aggravate them is impoſſible. Open your eyes, you ſee them covering our land like a deluge. Open your ears, you can ſcarce hear any thing, but curſing, lying, and evil ſpeaking. Go where you will, you meet with ſin at noon day. It has thrown off reſtraint, and is not afraid to appear without a maſk. Yea, ſins abominable to nature are heard of in our land, and there are too many men among us, who refuſe to believe, that God ever rained down fire and brimſtone from heaven, and miraculouſly deſtroyed certain horrible monſters of ſin. Stop, and conſider, whether theſe things be ſo. If they be, have we not great reaſon for humiliation? Ought we not to be humbled for our national wickedneſs, and ſtill more humbled, for that having ſo many

means of reformation, graciouſly vouchſafed to us, we not only continue wicked, but alſo are hardened, and thereby grow worſe and worſe.

While we are thus mourning for the wickedneſs of our people, let us never forget, that we ourſelves are part of the people, and that our ſinfulneſs has made a large addition to the national guilt. Let us never loſe ſight of this conſideration, leſt we ſhould find matter for cenſoriouſneſs, where we only want matter of humiliation. The ſight of our ſins, as part of the ſins of the nation, will ſerve to keep us in a proper frame to profit from the

FOURTH humbling circumſtance we have to mention, namely, that God is now viſiting us for our public ſins. This is the ſcope and deſign of his preſent judgments, and ſhall we not be humbled under his almighty hand? He has ſhewn himſelf offended at our ſins, and has chaſtiſed us for them as a nation. Hereby he would teach us this uſeful leſſon, that we ſhould turn to him with a national repentance, if we hope to be pardoned and ſaved. If we now humble ourſelves before him, his former chaſtiſements will be turned into bleſſings: But if after being often chaſtiſed, we refuſe to glorify him by our humiliation, he will certainly be glorified in our deſtruction. If the rod of his mercy does not humble us, the ſcourge of his juſtice ſhall deſtroy us. Humbled we have not been by any of God's paſt judg-

ments,

ments, therefore we have reaſon to fear greater: for if being chaſtiſed for ſin, we nevertheleſs will not leave it, what can we expect, but to be cut off in our ſins? This has been the conſtant method of God's providence, in his dealings with private perſons, as well as with public communities. Fearful is that ſentence which is already gone out of the Lord's mouth—Oh that it may ſtrike fear into every careleſs ſinner, who hears it, "He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy." *Prov.* xxix. 1. We have often been reproved, and yet we have hardened our necks, what then ſhould hinder ſudden deſtruction from coming upon us, and that without remedy? Let this awful conſideration ſtir us up to plead earneſtly with God for the hardneſs of the people's hearts. Let us be deeply humbled for thoſe obſtinate ſinners, who refuſe to be humbled for themſelves, and let us beg of God to ſpare them. Spare thy people, O Lord, ſpare them, and give not thine heritage over to reproach.

Let us lay all theſe things together, and ſee whether there be not matter enough for the deepeſt humiliation. We are altogether ſinful in nature, ſinful in life, a country profeſſing Chriſtianity, and yet abounding with ſin, and hardened in it at this very time, when God is chaſtiſing and puniſhing us for our ſins. He has given us, during this unſucceſsful war, ſome ſevere chaſtiſements

ments, but they have not brought us to a right ſenſe of ourſelves, and therefore we may expect they will be more ſevere. God has ſhewn us plainly, that he is not on our ſide, and we have felt his diſpleaſure, but we are not humbled under it. Without humiliation he will continue to fight againſt us, and what calamity is there ſo great, which we may not then juſtly apprehend? What ſucceſs can we hope from our fleets and armies, if the Almighty go out againſt them? What is our ſecurity as an iſland, if he put it into the hearts of our enemies, and if he come with them, to invade us? In this caſe how exceedingly ſhould we be alarmed to think, that our ſins may provoke God to join with our enemies, and to give them ſucceſs. Every thing dear and valuable to *Engliſhmen* and proteſtants would then be loſt. Heatheniſm and ſlavery would get poſſeſſion of our religion and liberties. While God threatens us with theſe calamities, he gives us time to pray againſt them. While they are at a diſtance prayer is our weapon, and God ſeems now to put it into our hands. O that we may uſe it aright to his glory, and to the preſervation of this church and kingdom.

My Chriſtian brother, after you have weighed theſe things attentively, judge whether it be not a ſeaſonable and a ſafe meaſure, which we would perſuade you to take. And you will take it, if you are indeed a friend to our preſent happy eſtabliſhment

eſtabliſhment in church and ſtate. Your love for them will put you upon doing every thing that lays in your power to ſerve them; and here you have a fair opportunity, which if you make uſe of, it cannot but do you ſervice, and may be a bleſſing to them. Pray for them at the appointed hour. Determine, through God's aſſiſtance, that nothing ſhall hinder you from joining us. Break through all engagements, all hindrances to meet the Lord's people at the throne of grace. And for your encouragement remember, that he who ſitteth upon the throne is the God who heareth prayer, and who has invited you to call upon him in the day of trouble: So will I hear thee, ſays he, and thou ſhalt glorify me.

If it has pleaſed God to put it into the heart of any perſon who reads theſe few lines, to make part of this praying congregation, and he is at a loſs to know particularly what he ſhould aſk of God; let him firſt beg of the Father of mercies to give him the ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication, that he may offer up his petitions acceptably through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. And then let him requeſt the grace of humiliation, that he may be truly and deeply affected with the four particulars before mentioned. Let him pray to God to give him ſtill more humbling views of his ſinful nature, and to bring to his remembrance his ſinful life, with the ſinfulneſs of his ſins, that ſeeing himſelf to be nothing but vile and ſinful duſt

duſt and aſhes, he may be diſpoſed to mourn for his own ſins, and then for the crying ſins of this guilty land, and for the hardneſs and impenitency of our people's hearts, upon which the heavy judgments of God have as yet made no impreſſion. And then let him implore mercy firſt for himſelf, and afterwards for the nation, through the atoning blood of the Lamb of God. Earneſtly let him plead with the Father, that for the ſake of his dear Son he would give us grace to turn from our ſins by true repentance, that iniquity may not be our ruin. And although the paſt judgments have not reclaimed us, yet let him pray the more fervently for the gift of the Holy Spirit, that his grace may be poured out abundantly upon us to ſhew us the error of our ways, and to revive the ſpirit and power of Chriſtianity, that we may receive Chriſt Jeſus the Lord as our Saviour, by the merits of whoſe moſt precious blood we may be ſaved from the guilt and puniſhment of ſin, and by whoſe almighty grace we may alſo be ſaved from the dominion of ſin, that being thus delivered by him from the hands of our enemies, we may ſerve God without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him all the days of our life.

In theſe our requeſts let us never forget to pray for the preſervation of the proteſtant church, and all its members throughout Europe, and eſpecially for the peace of our eſtabliſhed church, and for all orders and degrees of its

miniſters, beſeeching God to give them his grace and heavenly benediction, that both by their life and doctrine they may ſet forth his glory, and ſet forward the ſalvation of all men. And to the end there may never be wanting ſuch perſons in the church, let us pray for all ſeminaries of Chriſtian education, eſpecially for the two Univerſities. May the Spirit of wiſdom preſide over them, and water them with the dew of his heavenly grace, that the youth educated in them may come forth to the work of the Lord fitted with all proper graces as well as gifts. And ſince the harveſt is now great, may the Lord of the harveſt ſend forth more of his own labourers.

May the God of love diſpoſe us alſo to pray fervently for all the proteſtant diſſenting congregations, which love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity. May he ſhed that love abroad in all our ſouls, which alone can effectually free us from party ſpirit. And may he thus reconcile our hearts to them, and theirs to us. Oh that we may ſee an end of thoſe bitter diſputes, which have ſo long diſturbed the peace, and hindered the union of proteſtants: and may there be only this one holy contention between us, whether the miniſters out of the eſtabliſhment, or we in it, ſhall labour moſt for the glory of our common Lord, and for the ſalvation of thoſe ſouls for whom he ſhed his blood.

And as the hearts of kings are in the hand of God, we muſt pray him to direct the heart of

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our gracious ſovereign lord king George, to do what will be for the glory of God, and for the good of his people, beſeeching the Almighty to enrich him with every temporal, and with every ſpiritual bleſſing, until he place upon his head a crown of eternal glory.

Let us alſo pray for the queen, for the prince of Wales, and for all the royal family, that God would endue them with his Holy Spirit, and enrich them with his heavenly grace, that he would proſper them with all happineſs, and bring them to his everlaſting kingdom.

And let us deſire the ſpirit of wiſdom to direct both houſes of parliament, all the kings counſellors, and judges, and all the magiſtrates throughout the kingdom, and to enable them faithfully to diſcharge the great truſt repoſed in them, for the puniſhment of wickedneſs and vice, and for the maintenance of God's true religion and virtue.

Let us beg of God now to go forth with our fleets and armies, and to give them ſucceſs againſt our enemies in this war, in which we are engaged. And let us pray him to bleſs our officers, and ſoldiers, and ſailors, and to protect them in all dangers, and to cover their heads in the day of battle. And let us earneſtly and heartily pray for their reformation, and alſo for a reformation at home, without which we cannot expect ſucceſs from our arms abroad. May the Spirit of the living God work upon the hardened hearts

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of our people, and ſoften them by his grace, that they may ſee the error of their ways, and cry for mercy before it be too late, and may they find it through the atoning blood of the Lamb of God. O that there may be a general turning to the Lord, and may our eyes live to ſee it. *Amen.* So be it, Lord Jeſus.

Theſe ſhort hints may be enlarged and improved, as time and occaſion ſhall offer. My Chriſtian brother, may the Spirit of the living God direct thee, how to enlarge and to improve them. And after thou haſt once begun, and haſt ſpent ſome evenings of the Lord's day in this devout exerciſe, be upon thy guard, leſt thou ſhouldſt be tempted to leave it off. Never be tired of ſuch a good work. Pray for the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication, and carry thy prayers into practice. The more thou prayeſt, the more will God make thee joyful in the exerciſe of prayer. Go on in his ſtrength, and perſevere. Hold on thy ſuit, and wait upon the Lord our God, until he have mercy upon us. Be not weary of joining with us, and in God's due time thou haſt his promiſe, "thou ſhalt reap, if thou faint not." Lord, grant none of us, who ſet out well, may faint, until we who ſow our prayers, and they who reap the fruit of them, may rejoice together, here in the peace and reformation of our land, and hereafter through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord in eternal glory. *Amen.*

THE END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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